

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JULY, 1902



## ON THE ROAD TO ARCADY

BY MABEL NELSON THURSTON

WASHINGTON, February 26.

THE magic is abroad to-day. Always while the calendar yet proclaims winter there are a few rare hours when February gets into one, when you feel it throbbing in your finger-tips and tingling in your toes and racing all over you in delicious thrills; when straightway you forget your years and stated habits and the dismay of your first gray hairs and are a-tiptoe for adventure, knowing that youth and beauty are eternal. Such hours brim with intoxicating revelations. One has sudden comprehension of the eagerness of the peach-tips when they begin to flush against the sky, and the impulse that stirs the crocuses bumping their yellow heads against the frozen ground in their impatience to be out. What a passion of joy must be theirs, daring the winter stars and shivery air, the first to carry the glad message to the poor and heavy-eyed!

It sounds extravagant, but I am extravagant to-day. Yesterday Aunt Mattie left. I didn't put those sentences together—they just tumbled out so; I'm glad there's nobody to see and misunderstand. Through nine months of the year I love my relatives devotedly, and am pathetically grateful to those who are willing to come and share my big, still house. All through the winter it has been so cosy and comfortable to come in from the sharp, shining-cold or buffeting winds and find Aunt Mattie, plump and placid, knitting away before the fire. (It is appalling to think through what miles of glorious sunshine and blue sky she has serenely knitted!) It was perfect until three days ago, when nature distilled six drops of elixir of spring into the air. Then all the gypsy in me sprang up hot and panting. To think of knitting—knitting—knitting through the endless mystery and adven-

ture of the spring! It was enough to set one wild. Not that *I* should knit. I don't know how,—I never *mean* to know how,—but to be patted and cuddled and smoothed down into a proper fireside ornament when the winds were calling outside and the trees singing together—

And then a letter came summoning her home. I was repentant at first—I think it lasted for as much as half an hour; but I've noticed before the awful change that comes over my conscience in the spring. Winters I walk soberly, as befitting my Puritan ancestry, but when spring comes over the hill I always turn pagan, with Dryads and Naiads and all the sweet, wayward, irresponsible band of them for comrades; I am not even shocked when I hear down the wind the pipes of the great god Pan.

So I helped Aunt Mattie pack and told her (save the mark!) how sorry I was that she had to go so soon, and that she surely must come to me the very first day of next December (that, at least, was honest), and after I had seen her off I came home and hugged all the trees down the driveway. I think that Aunt Dilly saw me; I know that little Mrs. Bassett next door was laughing at her window. But I didn't care—spring was in *me*!

That evening Roger came up to condole. He knew I'd be lonesome, he said. Then he laughed. Now it is one thing to be exultant because you have sped the parting guest; it is quite another to have a cousin—a mere stripling of thirty-two at that—pretend to a knowledge of your emotions—uninvited! The fact that he belongs to the Survey and wears a whole alphabet after his name has nothing to do with the case. There are territories over which the Survey has no jurisdiction.

I told him gravely that it was dismally still and the house seemed as empty as a deserted chrysalis. He didn't seem impressed.

"Did you hug *all* the trees?" he asked.

"No," I returned hotly, "and if I did, I don't know what that has to do with it. I'm so delighted that Aunt Mattie has promised to come back next winter."

He smiled. It was a superior smile and entirely uncalled for. However, Roger isn't very often disagreeable; honesty—a small remnant of which defies even the degenerating influences of the spring—compels the confession. We made up before he left.

This morning I woke with the world—a still, gray waking, with the consciousness of a miracle at the door. Then I realized it was February, and spring was just across the way, and I was free for unnumbered and untellable wanderings exempt from the critical eyes of those to whom fate has committed the thankless duty—which they always heroically perform—of oversight of my ways. And as if that were not enough, the air was ringing with the whistle of a Carolina wren. It has been months since I've heard it, and its splendid volume summoned

the old amazement. I never lose the wonder of following that lusty call down to the mite of a bird at the end of it; it prophesies something as big as a red-head at least.

This morning it sounded a perfect pæan of triumph, as if the tiny whistler proclaimed himself the first discoverer of spring. It wasn't strange if he thought so, for we are in the midst of one of our alluring and treacherous February spring-tides. I scarcely could stop for breakfast, so irresistibly did the day call. This—*winter!* It might have been a fragment of some lost language, so empty of all dread did it fall upon the heart. There was no white breath anywhere; the whole earth lay quick—responsive to the sun; dreams of color haunted every bush, and the south wind was a courier of happy tidings, and no one was too poor or mean to have his word.

So I spent the day a-calling, and even I, who thought I knew, was astonished at the number of folk I found at home. There is an old slanting row of silver maples not far from the house, a fragment of some forgotten boundary. This morning I found them wide awake, their soft brown blossoms brushing the sky. They will go to sleep again—they always turn over and take a disgracefully long nap to make up for their early rising, standing finally bare and brown and unashamed in the midst of a green April sisterhood. But one forgives them for the gladness of that first message. To-day, however, a dozen eager things disputed the honor with them: The maples were thrusting out tiny yellow fingers, and down at the circles the pansies were laughing as if it were May-time; there were a few crocuses too, and I saw one clumpy pink hyacinth huddled up in a south corner, while up Highland Terrace the forsythia was creeping to bloom—already a golden star gleamed here and there in the brown tangle of its branches. It was spring, spring, *spring!* It will not last, of course; we shall pay for this. But hope will be easy now that she has been here; she cannot deny her own sweet word.

I came in long past lunch-time, radiant and dishevelled. The day had bred joyous superstition; each step had been so much happier than the last that one was ready for any miracle. I shouldn't have been surprised to find a violet or hear a thrush a-singing. And there were days of such delight before me—days and days of crowded solitude! How it fell to one poor mortal to be so favored of the gods I would not question, nor would I treat my joy delicately, lest it escape—I would accost it boldly as a hardy comrade and so beguile it into staying. Then I woke to the realization of a letter lying beside my plate. I wondered why it came just now, when human beings were at a discount, and even, for a moment, dallied with the temptation to put it aside till some more convenient time, but rejected that as unworthy the day. One could not be discourteous to a demand upon one's hospi-

tality even though the claimant be but a letter—or a beggar. That was what it probably was—I've noticed that philanthropy even takes a new lease of life in the spring. Perhaps it is heavenly wisdom; he who, fresh from the joy of the hills, could resist a plea for tired working girls or the old, weazened babies of the slums must recklessly dare the balances of justice.

A second glance destroyed my illusions: that large and very black chirography, which a casual view declared as clear as print and a more intimate acquaintance revealed full of baffling and elusive curves, never belonged to any overworked charity secretary. Just as inevitably it does belong to my cousin, Ethelwyn Dill. Once a year, at the season when people pay the penalty of all the Christmas gifts they've received, I am always the recipient of a note in the same writing. The paper is as changeable as Paris fashions. I infer from this latest communication that a deep ultramarine will be the prevailing shade for the next few months. I suppose it is one of the notions in which my solitude indulges me (Roger doesn't state it so badly, but his meaning is not to be evaded) that makes me class highly colored stationery in the same category with cologne. I am morally certain that I never could love anybody who wrote upon deep blue paper or indulged in Jockey Club.

I could almost pity myself when I remember how unsuspectingly I opened that offending envelope. Ethelwyn's stationery was pale as moonlight compared with the sensations I received from the contents—they were all colors of the rainbow. I seemed to hear the sentences exploding all about me, and at every explosion one more of my lovely solitary, spring-tide dreams was shocked from its hiding-place and floated away like thistledown up to the treetops, to the hilltops, to the stars. And I—

And the letter was so blithely unconcerned! It had all the assurance of spring-tide itself. I have saved it; I have a feeling that it may be wholesome reading for me.

"MY DEAR COUSIN PERSIS: I think I'd better say right in the beginning that this will probably be the strangest letter you ever received. I don't know what Daddy will say to me when I tell him what I have done, but as I sha'n't tell him till the letter is on its way it will be too late for him to say anything very effective. Besides, Daddy is such a dear, and knows how to yield so beautifully, I'm not a bit afraid of him. It's you that I'm afraid of,—just a little,—and yet it's to you that I'm making the most audacious proposal of my whole life.

"I suppose that I could hint, but I'd rather say it right out. Cousin Persis, I would so like to make you a visit! There—I held my breath and shut my eyes, which is the reason that line is so crooked—but I've said it. I've never been to Washington in my life, you know. Daddy has promised a hundred



times to take me, but there's one thing that has more influence with him than I have, and that is his old business. I'm so glad that girls don't have to have business. At least, some of them do, and it's splendid of them, and I admire them awfully, but I never could.

"But to go back to Daddy and business: I know that if I wait for him I'll be gray-haired and deaf and everything I eat will disagree with me, and I'll have to live on hot water and tablets, like old Mrs. Beedy. I don't know whether you remember Mrs. Beedy, it's so long since you've been here. It doesn't make any difference—you know the kind.

"Now, Cousin Persis, if I've been too bold, just tell me so, and it will be a splendid lesson for me, and I'll never ask anybody to invite me anywhere again as long as I live. But if I *could* come, you know if you didn't like me you could send me right back. How would it do—if you consider it at all, of course, I mean—for me to come three days on approval, the way they send books and ice-cream freezers and things? I'd tell you about myself beforehand if I knew what to tell. I'm not so red-headed as I used to be; I think maybe I'm not quite so red-headed *inside* either. It worried Daddy so that I really tried hard. But I'm afraid that I'm not very proper. I mean that I like to sit on the floor and go without gloves, and things like that. But, of course, if you didn't like it I'd try to remember about chairs. I know that I'd have a perfectly lovely time—I always do everywhere. It's you that I'm anxious about—if you should let me come. However, I couldn't bother you *very* much in three days—do you think so? In three days, when I was trying all the time to be good?

"There, I'm not going to chatter any more. I shall feel sort of—well, queer and excited—the way you do when you send a story to an editor (I did it once, so I know—that's one of the things I don't do any more)—till I hear from you. And I'm going to send this out to be mailed the moment I finish it, because I know if I kept it I should not have the courage to. But this I want to say last of all because it is the most important—it won't make the *least* difference if you don't want me to come. I mean, I'll be sorry, of course, but I shall know that I had no business to ask, and so, maybe, my conscience will feel better than if you let me come.

"Very lovingly, your little cousin,

"ETHELWYN DILL."

That's the letter. *What am I going to do about it?*

FEBRUARY 27.

I dreamt of Ethelwyn a dozen times last night. *Must* I tell her that she can come? If she were anyone but Cousin Tom's daughter—

LATER.

I have an inspiration—I'll invite her to come—next winter! She'll enjoy Washington twice as much when Congress is in session—Congress

and the Cabinet ladies! As if she could know the best time to come half as well as I know for her!

FEBRUARY 28.

I gave up, of course—I always do. I've written my answer and given it to Peter to mail in the nearest letter-box. I knew that that was the only way to do if I were going to be properly loyal to my family; if I had waited twelve hours longer I should have conjured up difficulties enough to keep a whole regiment away, to say nothing of one small cousin. I suppose that Providence is administering a dose of much-needed discipline—at least, Roger implied so when I told him to-night, and Roger's natural powers of judgment are intensified in this instance by the inestimable advantage of a twenty-years' acquaintance with his cousin. I had hoped that he might disapprove, in which case I could so easily have persuaded myself that I couldn't have a stranger coming in and destroying my poor boy's one corner of comfort. As a matter of fact, I have to acknowledge that the poor boy seems to get fully his share of joy out of the world in spite of the disadvantage of living in a boarding-house. But then he isn't there much,—he's off on expeditions continually,—and when he is he's generally up here! Heavens, what a wind!—

Peter came in just then, his face as blue as is compatible with its ebony finish and his teeth chattering with dismay.

"'Deed, Miss Persis, dis yere's one o' dem blizzards an' no mistake," he assured me. I ran to the window and looked out; thin, stinging lines of sleet were curling around the corner like whip-lashes, and there was a drift already several inches deep on the piazza. Not a thing to be seen, as the light streamed out, except a white, whirling chaos. One felt as if one were the first soul called up in the Judgment! If I had had any idea of this I should have gone over to Mrs. Bassett's, but it is too late now. A thought will keep coming to me: suppose that my letter to Ethelwyn should get lost and I have to write another! All sorts of things happen in blizzard confusions—if, of course, it is a blizzard. It may be clear and shining to-morrow—only—oh, the poor little blossoms that were so happy this morning!

MARCH 3.

It was a blizzard unmistakably. For forty-eight hours we saw nothing but the white, shifting walls till one's head fairly swam with the sight—as if the whole world—the whole universe—were snowing and blowing away. Besides, we were caught without coal enough, so that I have been taking my meals in the library and sleeping on a couch there; it and the kitchen are the only habitable spots in this great barn of a house. Our menu has been somewhat peculiar too. I never realized before how many things it is possible to get out of in two days in a fairly well-regulated house. Fortunately, we have chickens; but

I saw one of the poor creatures when Peter brought it in, and the agony of its frozen attitude has haunted me ever since. Milk we eat by the square inch; butter is lasting gloriously, for the simple reason that when we attempt to use any it evinces such a lively disposition to explore the room—once even landing on the top of the clock—that I decided to give up the luxury till balmier days. I tried to cut some apples for apple-dumplings yesterday when I didn't know what to do with myself, and I had to run and thaw out my fingers between every few slices. If scientists but realized the refrigerative power of apples under certain conditions we might seriously threaten the ice-trust. I might as well say it out—these two days have been interminable. One would think that I could have read, but I couldn't; this sullen roar of the wind numbs all one's senses. I feel all battered and sore with the strain of it; and, besides that, I always fancy that books are human enough to resent being made a convenience of; they sulk and refuse to talk, and display a rudeness of which they are utterly incapable at any other time. To see them at their best—winning and charming and utterly irresistible—one has to read when one should be doing something else. That is a flattery they cannot resist.

#### THREE O'CLOCK.

It has stopped snowing! The wind is galloping over the roofs as wildly as ever, but the snow has stopped, and even for five minutes a thin, pinky sun peered out. Mrs. Bassett came to her window and waved a red-flannel skirt at me; I knew that it was her revolt against the white sea that swept between us, swallowing the hedge as if it were no more than a fringe of grasses, and I snatched up a Roman blanket and executed a war-dance on my side. It seemed so blessed to see a human face! Peter and Dilly didn't count; they have been so frightened and shrivelled in the cold that they were *not* human. I raised my window a crack to get news of the world—the one window that had been spared by the storm. Through the heavy, surf-like roar came fine, sharp voices of distress, and the air suddenly seemed full of tiny brown bodies. I knew that it was weak of me: I hate English sparrows and I never shall have a better chance to coöperate with nature in lessening the pest; but somehow I couldn't think of them as sparrows this afternoon—only as tiny, pitiful comrades in distress. Besides, there were some snow-birds in the flock, and I had to save the snow-birds at any cost. I wrapped the afghan about me and ran through the kitchen, snatching up a loaf of bread from the table as I passed. When I got out on the porch I saw a little, old figure on the next porch similarly employed.

"*Now*, where's your consistency?" I called to her. I could see her small face wrinkle with laughter, and her voice blew across to me in gusts:

"I guess it's all snowed under. Anyway, there's a bluebird."

"Yes," I returned, "it's the snow-birds I'm feeding."

Seated before the library fire after dark I find the world has suddenly grown warm and friendly again; whether it was the cheery glimpse of my little neighbor or the bird gratitude that one likes to fancy (which will be shown in a couple of months by all the sparrows in the neighborhood locating in my ivy), I feel in touch once more. There is even an extra glow of complaisance because I happen to have given the last loaf of bread to the birds, and have in consequence gone breadless at supper: it is so easy to claim a fictitious nobleness for it—to pretend that I did it of gracious intent! I am sure that I enjoyed my supper far more than if the bread had been in me instead of in the sp—snow-birds.

Now that I am able to look at the storm from even an hour's perspective, it reveals a sudden charm. If I had had anyone to share the experience with, it might easily have been a pure joy full of fascinating plays at exploration and heroism. Is Providence trying to reconcile me to Ethelwyn? At any rate, I am going to get out in that snow to-morrow.

#### MARCH 4.

Such a day it has been! This morning Mr. Bassett cut a path through between the houses and Mrs. Bassett came over and paid me a visit, which I returned with diplomatic courtesy ten minutes after she left. The snow has drifted much more than we realized; in some places it is but a few inches deep, but over by the hedge we have a veritable tunnel. From Mrs. Bassett's windows I have a view of my house all bearded with ragged, milky icicles, some of them a yard long. The wind is still blowing and the surface of the snow is scarred into ridges. Hours of undimmed sun have only availed to thaw little silver spots on the white plain; the whole hillside is a shining sheet of silver, but the level stretches are all streaked and splashed with shadows, the hollows deep purple and the roads purple gray. The sharp contrasts of light and dark make the woods seem rushing upon one; they look so shabbily thin and poor and bare against this pitiless white background.

About ten o'clock Roger came in. He was just about used up; the roads out here are all unbroken, of course, and he had had to plough his way through a mile of drifts, for not even the upper end of the car-line was yet dug out. I gave him a sumptuous repast of corn-bread and canned peaches. As soon as he got thawed out he began to scold me.

"What for—the blizzard?" I asked. "I'm enjoying it, but I really wasn't responsible."

"It's no subject for joking, Persis—you might have been frozen

to death here with nobody within call." Roger is very tired and very cross when he gets as commonplace as this.

"But that wasn't possible," I assured him cheerfully. "I have Peter and Dilly; and, moreover, there are the Bassetts—I can go there at any time."

"Yes, and suppose that you were taken ill? I suppose you would get up and go over there in a blizzard!"

"It might cure me," I suggested heartlessly; "and, anyway,"—with the charming inconsequence that is so pleasing to mankind intent upon argument,—"I didn't, you see—I've just been having a good time; and there won't be another blizzard this year, and besides all that, Ethelwyn is coming, so I won't be all alone any more."

"As if a three-weeks' visit counted! You ought to have someone with you all the time. You need it, Persis."

"So I understood you to say. How do you know that Ethelwyn and I won't take such a fancy to each other that we shall refuse ever to be parted again?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I suppose that you will please yourself," he answered stiffly.

After a while, however, the warmth began to penetrate and he grew more human, and before he left he was quite himself again, only saying, as he put on his overcoat, that he supposed I would be safe enough now through the rest of the year, but next winter things should be different. I thought if the little delusion made him any happier, he was welcome to it; there are ten months before next winter—ten months of untroubled hermitage-life; to become excited over the question now would be as foolish as for a buttercup to worry over next year's weather possibilities.

It was after four when he left, and for the next hour I sat glued to the window watching the sunset pageant. At one time the whole hilltop was like a rose; then the light faded and the shadows stormed it and it changed into a blue sea with a golden path to the sun; then the golden path too vanished, and it was all harsh and cold and gray. Only down on the edge of the darkness the city lay in a rim of golden lights. The wind has gone down at last and it is so utterly still! There is something almost terrible in the silence falling upon four days of tumult. It is as if everything in the world were dead.

MARCH 5.

Dilly is sick. I hope, though, it will be nothing serious. I really think she was just frightened into it by the cold.

MARCH 6.

Dilly is worse. I have been with her all day. Mrs. Bassett wanted to divide the care, but I wouldn't let her—Dilly has petted me all my



## On the Road to Arcady

life. I should feel small indeed if I deserted my old friend now. But if *only* we could get a doctor out here!

SIX O'CLOCK.

The doctor at last. He says that it is a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism—that probably Dilly will never be able to do anything again. Poor old soul! she is so worried at my nursing her. She has sent Peter for a niece, Minerva Carter, who, she declares, can do everything. I suppose I may as well reconcile myself to a stranger first as last—it evidently has to come. One thing, if Minerva should prove to be—what one cannot help foreseeing—a parody upon her name, I shall have the best of excuses for postponing Ethelwyn's visit. The more I think of it the more sure I am that this is the door of escape. Moreover, if Minerva should, by any unheard-of chance, prove to be the paragon that Dilly paints her, then I shall be sure that the balance of nature will be restored by Ethelwyn. No one, not even a favorite of fortune, could dare dream of such felicity as the addition to one's household of a goddess of wisdom *and* a companionable young cousin. I have a suspicion that that line has proved traitor to me. I am reckless to-night, and, besides, Roger will never see this. I *have* been lonely sometimes. The more I have loved the haunting, aching beauty of the spring-time the more I've longed for somebody to love it with me. Mrs. Bassett is perfect, but she has a house to keep, and her house includes a husband, so that evenings and late afternoons and meal-times—the very times, in short, when I invariably most want to enjoy the mood of the day, she is almost always busy. A little, red-haired girl who *loved* these things—I have not dared let myself think what of joy that might portend. Meantime, I thank my happy fortune that Roger is away on some geological business or other and doesn't know of Dilly's illness. He might moralize.

MARCH 7.

Minerva Carter has come. I tremble to write it (I am "hitting wood" industriously with my left hand), but

"She's all my fancy painted her—  
She's lovely, she's divine."

A great, gaunt giantess, as black as the bottom of my ink-bottle, with arms like flails and a subterranean voice, but wearing an air of strength and competency as bracing as a west wind. In ten minutes I had fallen weakly back into my properly subordinate place, and Minerva was "swinging" the whole household. Peter goes about enveloped in a perpetual grin; as for poor old Dilly, it is pathetic to see her relief. Blessings upon Minerva, even although she destroys my last hope of a spring-tide Ethelwyn.

MARCH 12.

A letter from Ethelwyn to-day, and she's coming Friday. Friday—that at least is fitting! *She* is as gay as a tulip, but the moment that Peter appeared at the door with that square of ultramarine in his hand a terrible foreboding fell upon me. And I wasn't mistaken. If it were only for three days or three weeks! But Ethelwyn mentions incidentally, as carelessly as if it were of no more importance than the loss of an old glove, that Cousin Tom will probably have to go abroad for three or four months on business; she doesn't *say* anything, but she has the blandest confidence in a generous and genial Providence burdened with no weightier or more disagreeable duty than arranging pleasures for young women of twenty-one. *Three or four months!* Why, that means all the spring-time and June! It means that I shall have to spend the magic hours of the year tramping asphalt pavements and climbing endless stairs and going to all points of the compass to stare at houses where people lived whom we're supposed to know about and don't, while out on the hills the dogwood will whiten and the new leaves come in a thousand ways of beauty, and the birds make their wonderful uncharted journey, and the winds go singing—singing—oh, how can I lose it all! Those brief purple days of hepatica—the white hours when the bloodroot lives its exquisite life—the April evenings when the trees on the hillside stand shoulder deep in shadow, their bright heads shining in the last light—the early May evenings, pink and fragrant as an apple-blossom—all these lost out of my life forever—all for a red-headed girl! And there's no knowing what else it means, either. You never can tell what red hair means! I will try to think it all out—it might as well be faced first as last.

She will undoubtedly be very modern and progressive—young people of twenty-one always are; I've no doubt that I was myself at twenty-one. She will probably view my habits of washing the silver at the table and cutting loaf sugar and twisting lamp-lighters (when I'm in the mood), and a score of other old-fashioned practices, as curious discoveries from—oh, say the Middle Ages! Probably she writes—to be sure, she spoke of that stage as past, but she may be planning a novel in secret,—they generally are,—in which case I shall undoubtedly figure as the interesting faded and genteel spinster. Perhaps she will be kind enough to supply me with a past history. That, at least, would be interesting. Or it may be that she doesn't care for books, in which case what shall I do with my dear, old, brown comrades in the library? I've always been so jealous for them, and let no one into the room who would disturb their gentle company. Once in a while, to be sure, an intruder slips by me. There was a girl the other day (I think she must have been twenty-one) who evaded my intention and landed, bewildered, in the dear, old, shabby room, and feeling that something

was demanded of her by the gazing ranks, asked me if I didn't think Shakespeare was "nice." I wonder if Ethelwyn thinks Shakespeare nice! I wonder—

I was interrupted by Mrs. Bassett, who came shivering into the room on the edge of the bitter wind like a tiny dry leaf, her little, old face full of laughter. I've wondered sometimes how old she is; I know how young—she is born anew with every day. She possesses the finest genius in the world—that of living joyously; lover of her kind though she is, she is yet her own most intimate comrade, and life is never dull to her, for she herself creates events.

She settled down into her favorite chair—she has one in every room in the house—and told me of her latest experience, which concerned a certain popular idol who has just tumbled from his pedestal, and by his fall uncomfortably jostled the emotions of the public. I knew that Mrs. Bassett, who is a born hero-worshipper, had his picture tacked up in her little sewing-room, and I had been curious to know what she would do with it.

"Yes," she said, smiling radiantly across at me, "I wouldn't give in for a long time. I've found it doesn't do to believe newspapers too soon. Seems sometimes as if there's one thing people like better than stickin' folks up on pinnacles, and that's pullin' 'em down. And come to, like as not 'twas all jest a newspaper story, anyhow, so I waited. But when all the papers fell into line I began to think the time had come to up and do something, so when father came home last night I said to him, 'Father, you jest take that picture down from the sitting-room door, will you, please?' so father, he took it down and brought it to me. I was jest gettin' supper; I'd been frying doughnuts and the fat had splattered a little mite. That give me my opportunity. *I jest scrumpled up that picture and blacked the stove with it!* It came into my mind all in a flash that that would relieve my feelings. It did too—I felt real refreshed after I'd done it. Father, he stood and laughed at me, but I didn't care for that. Women are made different from men—that's what 'tis: now that we don't believe in witches no more, I dunno but I approve of stickin' pins in dolls—'twould save a whole lot of feelings from turning round an' stickin' into you!"

I am impressed with her resolution—it seems as if it ought to work in the case of Ethelwyn—only I can't quite make the application. There is a stiffness of temper about a cabinet photograph that unfits it for the ideal stove-polisher. Besides, I am ashamed of my weakness, but I might as well confess that such heroic measures are beyond me. I'd defy anyone to clean a stove with a portrait of Ethelwyn!

Three days more of freedom—*only three days!* I want to walk and walk! I'd like to lose my way over the hills and not come home till June! And by an irony of fate, the whole world is thawing and

running off in streams of snow-water, and I challenge anyone to go slopping down slushy roads through an air penetrated with snow-chill and not find his out-of-door enthusiasm hanging a little limply from the experience. Probably as soon as Ethelwyn comes the world will drain off and blossom like a hyacinth. And I shall be spending the priceless days seeing them stamp bank-notes at the Bureau or gazing at the macerator in the Treasury!

MARCH 14.

To-morrow!

MARCH 15.

In half an hour I start down to the station to meet Ethelwyn.

MARCH 16.

Ethelwyn came last night. It was a Cæsarean experience. She came and saw and conquered—every one, from Minerva down to me. I think that she did it from mere force of habit. Apparently, from bits that leak out, her whole journey was in the nature of a triumphal progress. By careful calculation I find that it required the services of seven young men to get the flowers and candies with which she was laden safely on the train. Half an hour after she had started she fell in with a former school-mate and her brother (it is a curious fact, and one whose law I have not yet been able to discover, that all Ethelwyn's friends and acquaintances are possessed of interesting brothers or cousins), who relieved her of all care as far as Wilmington, and by the time that they left the porter and conductor had become her abject slaves. Of course, Ethelwyn has not explained things exactly this way; I am merely acting upon the inevitable suggestion of the course of events since her arrival. As I said, everybody here surrendered at once, and Ethelwyn is charmed with everything and everybody. Until I saw how delighted she was with the old house and its belongings I never realized the deprivations of those who have spent their lives in little new, crude manufacturing towns. Ethelwyn goes about touching the ancient chairs with small, endearing caresses; she spends hours searching into the gloom of the old portraits in the north parlor; she is full of wonder over the sugar scissors and plate warmers; she thinks Peter and Aunt Dilly the oddest people she ever saw and Minerva a splendid old dear, and Mrs. Bassett the "most fascinating little fairy witch" in all the universe. I wonder sometimes where in this venerable world she places me; I have no doubt that I rank as one of the gray-haired sisters.

We had a long talk this morning. Of course, there was no question but that she was to stay with me till Cousin Tom returned from Europe, so it was best to have the situation declared at once. Ethelwyn herself opened the way. She was standing at the window looking

down the road. I live in dread of the time when the city shall reach one of its long arms out here. It hasn't yet; there is Mrs. Bassett's tiny little cottage with the poplars whispering at its windows, but beyond that no winter neighbors; in the summer, when the trees spread their green tents, there are so many—if one sees them!

"It is *very* quiet here," Ethelwyn remarked thoughtfully.

It couldn't have happened better, and I seized the advantage without a moment's delay. I impressed upon her young mind that it *was* quiet here—that it had been the arduous labor of a large portion of my lifetime to make it so, and that at last people understood and respected my eccentricities. For nine months of the year guests were welcome to all that I could give, but for the other three, from the middle of March to the middle of June, I was at home only to the hills.

"I hope you won't mind, Ethelwyn," I finished. "I gave you fair warning, you know."

Ethelwyn drew a long sigh of bliss.

"Oh Cousin Persis," she cried, "I think that's just the *sweetest* thing! I *adore* quiet. And there isn't any at home, you know. Somehow or other people are always coming—they never *will* understand that I like to be alone. I don't know what it is—maybe it's the air—or the mosquitoes. Yes, I think that's it—the mosquitoes! They make people restless. It's so much more endurable to get up and go somewhere than to sit still and let them devour you wholesale! And you have no mosquitoes here, you say? And no callers? Oh Cousin Persis, it's the loveliest place I ever heard of in my life—it's—it's just the Forest of Arden—that's what 'tis. I'm going to date all my letters from the Forest of Arden."

I looked at her firmly.

"If I remember rightly, Ethelwyn, things happened in the Forest of Arden, and——"

She interrupted me a trifle hastily. "But this," she said, "shall be a forest where nothing happens!—only birds, you know, and hills and sunsets and things like that. Oh, nothing else at all forever and ever!"

APRIL 5.

It is three weeks since Ethelwyn came. I have to acknowledge that things have not happened exactly as I planned, but Ethelwyn has so clearly pointed out to me that it is not her fault at all—that, indeed, she seems to be the innocent victim of some persistent fate, that any haunting suspicions that I may have always merge into sympathetic commiseration. It was the night after our talk that Mr. Hawkins called. He was a neighbor up in Medway, and happening to be in Washington, felt in duty bound to call in order to report to Cousin Tom. I could but acknowledge the entire reasonableness of this when Ethel-



wyn explained it to me. And since he was to be here but a few days, and Washington was indulging in one of its spring blows, so that it was not gypsy weather, I had no reasonable ground of complaint.

But before he retired to his native haunts he asked permission to bring up a friend of his—a Mr. Smith. Now, it seems to me that just there Ethelwyn was a trifle weak. Mr. Smith lives in Washington. She might have foreseen results, though she assures me most solemnly that she couldn't possibly have imagined them—how could she? And then a little grieved droop creeps about the corner of her mouth, and "If I'm going to bother you, Cousin Persis, and spoil all your lovely spring-time, I'd better go home right away."

Naturally, that always reduces me to submission. One doesn't care to pose as an ogre, especially with a bit of coaxing pink-and-white-and-red girlhood. I know that I am being wheedled; I can see it in Mrs. Bassett's eyes and Minerva's and Roger's, but I just go right on—and so does Ethelwyn. I am a bit revenged that Roger's attitude piques her. He watches her with the patronizing amusement of a big dog towards a young and frolicsome puppy. She seems so much younger—I can see—to him than to me. I wonder if there is ever a happy woman who does not, at times, when nobody is watching, slip away to her securest place of treasures and try on her outgrown girlhood, and smile to see how well she still can wear it! There have been days and days when I could be as joyously inconsequent as Ethelwyn—only, of course, I never let anybody guess it; people would say that I was trying to keep young. Trying! As if, if one's heart is gray and wrinkled, the wisest skill could avail to hide it! If one isn't young without any trying, all the effort in the world will never bring one a single step nearer to the desirable goal. Youth is a gift, not an attainment. More people than we realize are born old and stay old forever after.

Ethelwyn, upon the other hand, was born young; she will be just as young at eighty, if she knows the world so long, as she is at twenty-one. I could shake Roger for not understanding this, yet at the same time I am amused at Ethelwyn's resentment. Somehow, to be looked upon as a pretty and promising child does not appeal to her in the least. She retaliates by always addressing him as "Mr. Roger," which calls up an inevitable vision of gray hair and spectacles and slippers, and never fails to make him squirm inwardly.

Aside from the interruptions of Mr. Hawkins, which are ended, and those of Mr. Smith, which I fear are not, the weeks have been full of pleasure. We have been doing sight-seeing—some, but not too much. It's a delight even to go sight-seeing with Ethelwyn (an opinion which I share with Mr. Smith), she has such impetuous, wren-like bursts of enthusiasm over such unexpected things. This was particularly notice-

able at the Capitol, where she showed a depth of interest in the bronze doors for which I was at an utter loss to account till I discovered that she was taking elaborate notes of Queen Isabella's dress with an eye to future creations of her own. But the Capitol disclosed joys at every step; the Supreme Court room met her approval because the red must make such a pretty background for visitors, and the reception-rooms because they had such lovely mirrors. She stood lost in thought before the picture of the "Marriage of Pocahontas." She climbed with unalloyed delight into the Speaker's chair in the House. I think, for one intoxicating moment, she had a vision of herself with all the honorable members asking permission to call! She experimented with every one of the whispering stones, holding long conversations with the guide, who apparently enjoyed it even more than she did; and when she came home she hugged me and told me she had had a perfectly lovely time and learned ever and ever so much, and I was such a dear to take her round. When I suggested that in case she found upon investigation that her knowledge was not of the sort that would appeal particularly to Cousin Tom she would find a guide-book in one of the library drawers, she made a protesting face and said that I was a saucy old thing. But when Ethelwyn says "old" you always feel that it is merely a term of endearment and has no reference to age. I've heard her say it in precisely the same tone to a puppy of ten-days' standing in the world.

Yesterday we went down to Mount Vernon. It was the most exquisite April day, an opal day of shifting lights and colors—emerald, amethyst, rose, that always just eluded vision and yet haunted the sight as an old song haunts the memory. We went down on the new electrics (returning by boat), and Ethelwyn, full of exclamations, till we had passed Alexandria, grew more and more silent as we went deeper and deeper into the spring-time. When she turned towards me I saw something shining in her eyes. She did not try to disguise it.

"I—things get me so stirred up sometimes," she said. "I suppose you think I'm always frivolling. I can't seem to help it when I'm happy; but sometimes when you think of something splendid—like Washington, you know——"

I knew, and I loved the child for it. She looked up through the shining mist in her eyes. "The happiness gets too big and runs over," she explained.

I shall always think that it was a small thing for fate to shatter a mood like the one that we were both in when we stepped off the cars and confidently presented ourselves at the gate. I had a box of lunch and Ethelwyn one of candy. Ethelwyn passed through, of course,—Ethelwyn always passes through everywhere,—but the guardian of the turnstile stretched a prohibitive arm before me.

"No lunches are allowed to be eaten on the grounds," he said firmly.

I was filled with consternation; from childhood I had picnicked on the beautiful lawn overlooking the quiet river. I glanced despairingly at Ethelwyn, who grew stern with indignation.

"You didn't stop me," she cried, "and I had a box."

The gatekeeper grinned. "Candy passes in all right," he explained.

But Ethelwyn was not to be melted. "Well, I guess I'm not going in if my cousin can't!" she declared with spirit. "Will you please let me out—*immediately!*"

The gatekeeper started another smile which got petrified half way by Ethelwyn's freezing glance. Secretly I couldn't help sympathizing with him; it was as if a humming-bird tried to assume the dignity of a crow.

"Yes, Miss, certainly, Miss," he answered meekly. But I am morally certain that behind our remonstrant backs he indulged in wild hilarity.

Out on the boardwalk Ethelwyn and I looked at each other.

"There's only one way of outwitting him," she suggested delicately.

"But how can we?" I returned. "There are no trees that we can reach—everything's fenced off both sides of the track; and it's too hot in the sun. Of course, we could go in here." We stood outside the tiny restaurant experimentally. Then Ethelwyn made up a face.

"No, we couldn't!" she said decidedly. "It smells milky; and I know the dishes are an inch thick—you can tell by the sound! Just listen a moment."

I listened and was convinced. "But what can we do?" I asked helplessly. "We don't want to throw away Minerva's lunch—she took so much pains with it. Besides, we'll be hungry long before we get home."

"We're not going to throw it away," Ethelwyn replied firmly. "We are going to sit on the platform there by the station and eat it. There's nobody around but that man at the souvenir counter, and we'll get on the other side from him."

It seemed the only plan, so we adopted it unanimously. Our beautiful, high-minded mood was gone, but the day was good to us, and another, utterly different, but full of charm, fell upon us. We sat on the bench up against the end of the platform, shielded from observation of the souvenir man and the gatekeeper: the clatter of the dishes came to us so softened that Ethelwyn relented and acknowledged that possibly her former estimates had been excessive and she would take a quarter of an inch from them. We could no longer smell milk, and though the trees were shut from us, their April beauty could not be

prisoned; and a song-sparrow swinging on the tip of a young maple near by sang and sang.

So we ate our lunch, shook off the crumbs, and once more presented ourselves at the gate—this time with a far-away and disinterested manner, calculated to deceive the gatekeeper should he fancy that he ever had seen us before. He really behaved very well; we paid our tribute and stepped through the turnstile and into a hundred years ago.

For two hours we wandered there. Ethelwyn was in ecstasies—subdued, for the quiet of the place laid its spell upon us, but no less keen. But it was due to Ethelwyn that two of my dearly cherished illusions vanished, leaving a void which nothing can ever fill. It was Ethelwyn's fault entirely, because the guards would explain things to her; I've been there a score of times, and they have never shown any such concern for my enlightenment. Through the whole two hours they had all been so pleasant and gentlemanly that I never dreamt of danger when at last we stepped innocently into the library. Now, the library has always been a favorite with me, bare though it is, and I was wandering contentedly about, reading the titles of the poor, imprisoned books, doomed to spend their days unread behind the closed doors, when Ethelwyn's voice, full of irresistible pleading, came to me from the other side of the room:

"Oh, *couldn't* you show me one of the secret closets? I never saw a secret closet in my life. Where I come from they never have secret anything. And I'm so longing to see one!"

The guard looked distressed. "I'm sorry, Miss, I'd like to oblige you. Lots of people have asked me about those closets, but I've been here five years and never discovered one and never found anybody that had. I reckon that the closets and the secret way down to the river were made up by the papers when——"

I grasped Ethelwyn's hand in terror. "Come," I commanded, "come this minute!"

Ethelwyn followed me breathlessly. "What is the matter?" she cried. "Are you sick, Cousin Persis? Do you want some salts? What is it?"

"I want something left!" I returned bitterly. "Ethelwyn Dill, don't you know that if you had let that man talk three minutes longer we should probably have learned that there never was any *Washington*?"

Ethelwyn looked at me earnestly, and her voice was very subdued.

"I—I didn't realize," she stammered penitently. "I get so interested when men are talking. I'm real glad that you called me away, Cousin Persis. Is there any place that we can go where there won't be any danger?"

"There's the garden," I replied, somewhat mollified. "We're not likely to meet anybody there, but if we do——"

"I'll not let him tell me a single, solitary thing!" Ethelwyn promised.

We went across the lawn to the sundial and then over to the garden. At the entrance Ethelwyn stopped and bought a souvenir spoon. I think that she already regretted her rash promise and took this way of consoling herself.

That beautiful old garden—with what gentle benediction its peace fell upon us! We wandered in and out the box-bordered ways, meeting in fancy at every turn men and women its paths had known a hundred years ago. Once Ethelwyn stopped.

"Didn't you hear them?" she asked.

"What?" I answered.

"The little children—the queer, prim, dear little children that played here a whole century ago. Think what the trees have seen, and these hedges, and——"

The inevitable voice—man's voice—interrupted us:

"Can I show you ladies anything about the garden?"

Ethelwyn looked up: her face, still flushed and tender with her fancies, was enough to make a man say anything.

"Oh, I'd love to hear——" she began; then she recollected herself. "I think we know all that we care to," she said coldly.

The new man seemed amused; they all have different ways of looking, though they mean the same thing.

"I've been gardener here for twenty-five years," he suggested with admirable gravity. "I thought that perhaps I could show you some of the oldest plants and tell you their history."

Ethelwyn looked pleadingly at me; I couldn't help it, I didn't mean to yield at all, but I heard a voice that I could not disown saying mildly:

"We should enjoy seeing them very much. We were afraid at first, because we have just suffered a cruel disappointment. One of the guards in the house dragged a dearly-beloved myth out into the sunlight,—one of those stories you've been brought up on, you know,—and painstakingly proved to us that there was nothing there. We felt as if we couldn't bear it to have anything like that happen here."

The gardener laughed as if he were pleased. "It won't happen with me," he promised confidently. "I can assure you, ladies, that you won't lose a single thing in here."

Accordingly, we threw our fears to the winds and surrendered ourselves to the delight of the hour, and the old garden, only dreaming of blossoms as yet, revealed to our happy eyes its wealth of story and



legend. Last of all we stopped beneath a tall, swaying rose-bush veiled in the misty green of its new leaves. It was under this bush, we learned, that Major Lewis told his love to Nellie Custis, after which the darkies, fancying it endowed with some sweet magic, claimed that one of its roses would make smooth the roughest path over which true love might seek a way with bleeding feet. And many and many was the timid lover to whom the sight of the rose or the story of its wondrous history gave a fine glow of courage, many the shy, longing couples that it had brought together. As we listened the scales fell from our eyes, and in the tall, middle-aged man before us we beheld but another merry masquerade of the little god of love.

"I'd give you one of the roses, Miss—ladies," he finished, "if they were in bloom now. There ain't a year that I don't give away hundreds, and there ain't a year that I don't get letters telling me what they've done. I'd like mighty well to give you one."

"Maybe a little, tiny spray of the leaves——" Ethelwyn suggested.

The gardener shook his head. "You can have it and welcome," he said, "but I don't believe it's worth anything. It's the roses that do it all. They're white roses and sweet, though they're not extra pretty." He was cutting as he spoke two tips from the new green sprays. We both thanked him, though I felt as embarrassed with mine as I should if somebody had presented me with one of the candy hearts that used to be considered the height of desirability in my childhood. But Ethelwyn was at no loss whatever. She discovered at the tip of her spray a tiny green bud.

"It's all there," she declared with satisfaction. "It doesn't make a bit of difference that it's all folded up and hammered down tight—it's there just the same."

She pinned the bit of green against her violet waist. Going back her mood was pensive; the reason came as we left the car and walked home through the late April afternoon.

"Did you notice," she questioned hesitatingly, "how several people—nice people, of course—looked at me when we got into town? I'm sure that the rose is working its charm."

I said that I had noticed nothing unusual. I hope that she didn't interpret it to mean that people always look at her. I don't want Ethelwyn spoiled.

APRIL 12.

We've given up sight-seeing, except what we can see from the windows—the splendid shaft of the monument, changing color with every changing light; the Soldiers' Home, at this distance a white marble dream in the midst of the exquisite rose and violet of the waking trees, and the old convent tower beyond the silver foldings of the

hills; spring is too wonderful—every hour that we have to take from it for the commonplace necessities of food and sleep we give with grudging protests, like a miser parting with his cherished gold. Misers of spring we truly are.

Yet though Ethelwyn loves it all, there is a large difference between us. For some days past I've observed upon her part a growing disposition to take it all seriously, which is distinctly rebuking to my ignorantly joyous hours. Finally, yesterday she announced her intention of spending the morning down-town.

I offered to go with her, but she told me that she couldn't be so selfish when both my eyes were full of arbutus and hepatica. Ethelwyn's figures of speech are sometimes slightly startling, but she seldom fails to comprehend one's mood. It was a morning when the hills were silver and the air full of sweet, fleeting breaths of perfume, and the birds were in ecstasy. Ethelwyn kissed me and ran for my old hat and jammed it down on my head and pushed me out the door.

"Go to your old hills!" she laughed. "The spell is upon you—you can't deny it. You'll wander till you're tired out and then come home shining—I know you! It's perfectly reprehensible, such absolute content in such profound ignorance. I asked you the difference between a beetle and a bug the other day, and you couldn't tell me. I, Miss Goldwin, am going on a search for wisdom."

"That's too long," I returned, "it's a life search—and then you don't find it. But joy is waiting on the doorstep this morning. You'd better come, Ethelwyn."

"Never!" she replied firmly. "It isn't often that I thirst for knowledge, but I do to-day, and I'm going to make the most of it. You might as well stop your beguilements—I am adamant. And, besides, you're wasting time—yours, I mean, not mine."

The last argument prevailed and I fled. Oh, what a day it was! For a week past great winds had been abroad again and every little growing thing stood still—it almost seemed as if they held their breath. Then at last the wind went away, and in a single night a green tide swept over the hills and dashed to the treetops in spray of rose and pink and white. And above it all, a sky deep and tender as June, with, hour after hour, great, white, shining sails moving slowly across it. *Something* must have been going on up there—some great review of heavenly squadrons. I couldn't keep my eyes from the wonderful pageant—that is, I couldn't until, in the humiliating fashion the flesh has of intruding upon our holiest hours, I was compelled to lower my gaze by a violent crick in my neck.

And after all I had been passing such a world of beauty below the sky! All the mystery of the new leaves (year after year I've laughed at the ignorance of the people who scour the country for azalea and

dogwood and Judas-tree blossoms, and never discover the wisdom of the beech-scrolls, nor the marvellous satin sheaths the hickories wear, nor that white-oak leaves, when they are babies, are as pink as arbutus), and the whispering of the spring-time voices, and the myriad delicate scents that blew up and down the air. *Scents!* I often think that noses might as well disappear from the human race for all the use that most people make of them. And nature has prepared such inexhaustible happiness for that humble organ. I've planned many a time to take my own nose on a holiday and leave eyes and ears at home, only, somehow, I always forget. Such is the effect of generations of ancestors who have recognized their noses only in times of severe affliction—such as a cold in the head, for instance!

So I walked on and on in deepening content. I cannot sing, but when I am happiest out-of-doors I always hum to myself—purring, Ethelwyn calls it. I purred all the morning and half of the afternoon before I even thought of going home. I knew that nobody would worry: Ethelwyn is well acquainted with my failings after living with me through four weeks of spring-time.

At five o'clock, tanned, wind-tossed, and generally dishevelled, I walked in upon Ethelwyn in daintiest afternoon gown, a thing of soft blue and feathery laces, as if she too had been looking at the sky; at least, I knew that if she had looked at the sky there would have been some such result of her observations sooner or later—Ethelwyn is nothing if not practical.

She was standing in front of one of the book-cases gazing at a row of oppressively new volumes. I crossed over and read the titles.

"How to Know the Wild Flowers," "How to Tell the Trees," "Ferns—Their Homes and their Haunts," "Birds of the United States," "How to Distinguish Mushrooms," "Our Common Butterflies," "Mosses for the People," "Our Insect Friends."

I remarked that she had omitted works upon geology and the stars. Ethelwyn frowned. "Probably you don't believe that I intend to study them," she replied, with her chin in the air.

I was gratified at the consideration with which she framed her sentence, and hastened to assure her that I did not doubt her intentions for the moment.

"But you think I won't carry them out, and that's just as unkind of you," she pursued, pinning me down.

"Why do you put such suggestions into my head?" I asked.

"You know you do," she replied, "and you can't deny it. And the worst of it is, I do too! I didn't realize till I got them home how many pages there were—I just kept going on and on thinking how nice it would be to have speaking acquaintances with all the out-door things, instead of having them meet you with a vacant stare because you can't

call them by name. But when the books came home and I stood them all up there they looked so dreadfully imposing! So then I counted up the pages: there are twenty-four hundred and seventy-two altogether; that would make, if I read them all the next four months, twenty pages a day, and then I forgot to leave out Sundays, and somehow there are so many things to do that twenty pages a day——”

“Twenty pages a *summer* day, Ethelwyn!”

“Yes,” she replied humbly, “I know it.”

The humility was so pretty that I hadn’t the heart to disturb it; but it was short-lived. She turned with sudden spirit.

“Anyway,” she remarked crushingly, “I know the difference between a bug and a beetle!”

I don’t know *where* they came from. I don’t mean birds or blossoms, I mean men! It occurred to me to count up, the other day, and although my suspicions had been growing alarmingly lately, I was full of consternation over the result. In the past three weeks we have had just four evenings without callers—masculine callers, I mean. Of course, half of this has been Mr. Smith, but I don’t know that that helps the matter any. Ethelwyn is greatly distressed. She declares that she cannot tell how it has happened. She does hope that she isn’t keeping “Mr. Roger” away. As a matter of fact, “Mr. Roger” in this new environment is developing unsuspected characteristics. It has been such a quiet old house for ten years past, I thought that he would like the brightness of young life in it once more. But to my surprise he pays no more attention to it than if the callers were so many sparrows chattering on the piazza. When he comes he immediately slips into his old corner in the library. I’ve scolded him and told him he’s too young to sit in corners, but it rolls off his conscience like raindrops.

“I’ve been old with you so long, Persis,” he declares teasingly, “I don’t know any other way.”

“Old with me!” I cry in scorn; “you’re old enough to be my grandfather. It’s *April*, Roger,—don’t you know it? As if anybody could be old in April!”

“But I’ve had so many Aprils—just as many as I’ve had Januarys. You never show any of these disquieting symptoms in January, Persis.”

“Will you come to walk with me to-morrow?” I ask.

“I can’t. Nobody can go walking with you any more; it is walking with Ethelwyn and Mr. Smith and Mr. Smith’s ersttime friend and present enemy, Dr. Walnut, and——”

“No, it isn’t!” I interrupt, “not to-morrow. Ethelwyn’s going wheeling with them. There’s a chaperone, since I’m ineligible for wheels, and I’m free to wander. Will you come?”

The mood falls away at that, and my old comrade is looking at me with frank, affectionate eyes.

"Of course I'll come. Why didn't you say so before, Persis?"

A few minutes later he goes off whistling; I slip out the back way to avoid the piazza sparrows, and wander down by the creek; I am not going to walk at all, but somehow I go on and on and finally have to wrench myself away and employ most undignified haste to get back in time for dinner. How can one help it when things call so? And oh, how do people *live* who have no spring-tide in their year!

MAY 10.

We have just gotten back from Maryland; for nineteen years now I've kept the May-time tryst with the wonderful violet pastures, but I never before kept it with Ethelwyn.

We started immediately after breakfast. The sky was unpromising at first and we conferred doubtfully, but as every hour is a season in May we decided against delay, though the clouds grew more and more lowering. We even walked through showers for a few minutes after we left the cars, but we were waterproof—to a moderate extent, that is—and would not turn back. And such showers they were! A very bath of fragrance—it was like being pelted with flower-petals. No wonder that it set the thrushes into an ecstasy of song! And after those few minutes it rained no more, the morning being cool and moist and gray, and the afternoon warm and sunny.

We had to cross the creek to reach the pastures. I waited to see what Ethelwyn would say when she first saw the marvel of those meadows—great, glowing stretches of emerald all shot through with purple and amethyst. She said nothing for three minutes—she just stood looking—then she stretched her arms wide.

"I want to hold them all—*all!*" she cried.

We sat down in the meadows. It was utterly still, except for the birds and the soft singing of the creek. Ethelwyn lay flat on her back, looking up at the hazy sun through a tangle of green blades and stems.

"It is Sleeping Princess Country," she said dreamily, "and it is the one day of the year when mortals can slip in, and we are the only ones who know it. Was it only this morning that I abused Minerva for waking me so early?"

"There wasn't any morning," I said, and laughed in sheer content.

Ethelwyn drew a long breath. "I've had everything I wanted to-day—*everything!*"

I didn't answer that; if I had, I should have said that I had more than I ever dreamed of wanting.

Ethelwyn's voice grew sleepy.

"Am I getting rooted?" she asked. "Is my hair turning green and



shiny, and are my fingers changing into violets? I feel so queer—and still—and happy!”

But moods are as fleeting as morning mists with Ethelwyn. I saw her turn more and more restlessly towards the brook. Finally she sat up and began unlacing her boots with hasty fingers.

“I can’t help it!” she cried. “I suppose you’ll think it’s dreadful, but I can’t help it—I’m bewitched! That brook is singing an incantation—I’ve got to follow.”

“Ethelwyn!” I cried, “what are you doing?”

“There isn’t a soul in sight,” Ethelwyn replied, without looking at me. “There isn’t a soul within ten thousand miles. I’ve got to do it. I’m going in wading. You’d much better come too, but if you won’t, you can walk along the bank and keep watch.”

She tied her shoes together, stuffed her stockings into them, and strung them across her shoulders. Then she stepped down into the brown, rippling water.

“O-oo!” she cried, with a little shivery scream half of chill and half of delight.

I followed along the bank, scolding like an excited hen.

“Ethelwyn, you must come out—it’s too early to go in wading—you’ll take cold surely. Ethelwyn, come out.”

But Ethelwyn was fairly into the spirit of it then; her little, white feet twinkled merrily through the swirls:

“Tisn’t cold,” she laughed, “it’s warm—and warm! Cousin Persis, you don’t know what you’re missing. You—— Good gracious! what is the matter?”

“It’s a man, Ethelwyn; and he’s coming straight down this way. He’s got a rod and he’s probably going to fish. Hurry—hurry, Ethelwyn!”

I reached down my hand. Ethelwyn, after one swift glance over her shoulder, grasped it vigorously (thereby nearly pulling me into the water) and clambered up the bank. But that was only the first step; there was not in the whole pasture a stone the size of an egg—nothing to shield us from the view of the unconscious fisherman, who, from his high vantage-ground, could oversee our slightest movements. But Ethelwyn was mistress of the situation; she promptly dropped down in a little heap among the violets, her shoes beside her.

“There!” she said, “nobody could guess anything now, and he won’t stay there long. I don’t believe there’s so much as a minnow there—if there was originally, I must have scared it away. I’m dreadfully sorry to keep you out in this heat, dear, but it won’t be for long, I’m sure.”

It was hot—I realized it at the word; the sun had burned through the haze and was shining directly down upon us. The violets—little

fire-worshippers—lifted their purple chalices in ecstasy, but we were not violets. It was *hot*. And that man staid: after a little, apparently having satisfied himself that there would be no immediate pressure of business, the creature actually took out a book and began to read. The sight roused Ethelwyn to a frenzy of mischief. She made remarks upon his appearance and character in tones nicely calculated to carry exactly half way across the creek, she threatened to get up and walk off anyway, and she curled her toes daringly through the grasses. I don't know whether I've ever spoken of Ethelwyn's curliness. Her hair curls, her eyelashes curl, her mouth curls up in the most captivating laughter, even her glances curl; but her toes were the curliest of all. Written down it isn't funny at all, but as we sat imprisoned in that wide violet meadow under the hot May sun it seemed to me that I never saw anything so irresistibly ridiculous as those small, white, wriggling toes squirming through the grasses.

"Just think, for your consolation, how Shakesperian we are," she said gleefully,—

" ' Who doth ambition shun  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Come hither, come hither, come hith——' "

A sudden terror fell upon her face. She gasped the words, "*Mr. Smith!*" and I turned to find that gentleman scarcely a dozen yards away bearing beamingly down upon us. At the same instant I was conscious of something hard coming in violent contact with my knees, and somehow comprehended that Ethelwyn's shoes were being thrust under my dress for concealment. It was all that she could do, she informed me afterwards in the course of an elaborate apology, to be responsible for her feet, she couldn't be expected to manage her shoes too.

The next moment I heard Ethelwyn exclaiming,—

"Why, Mr. Smith, what a great pl——"

I looked at her sharply: I knew that she had been brought up in an orthodox household, and felt that she was perilously near a fall. Somehow she dexterously swallowed the two letters and ended sweetly, "surprise."

"Same to me, I assure you," Mr. Smith replied, smiling blissfully down upon us. "I don't know when I've been more surprised myself than when I recognized you two ladies. Great place for violets—this." He glanced at our empty hands and flushed faces, and a puzzled expression dawned in his eyes. "Have you picked many?"

"No," Ethelwyn returned (she took the conversation bravely—she knew that she dare not impose *that* upon me), "no, we're going to before we go home, but we don't want them to wither. We're just sitting here now. I—I love to sit in the violets. Don't you, Mr. Smith?"

The poor boy looked as distressed as if he had been detected in some fatal discourtesy.

"I—why—the fact is, Miss Dill, I never tried it," he stammered.

"But you can now," Ethelwyn replied with an audacity that took my breath away.

The young fellow looked about desperately. He longed to stay with his divinity, but his face was moist with perspiration and growing redder every second. He was torn between his longings and his fears. He would willingly sizzle upon the sands of Sahara with her, but he showed the heat so horribly, and if, by yielding to his desire, he became an awful Scarlet Spectacle, could he hope that she would ever look upon him again? He ventured a timid protest, his agony making ravages in his smiles.

"I—I'd like to first rate, Miss Dill, but don't you think it's a little bit warm here? If we went over under those cedars, now——"

Ethelwyn's voice had suddenly grown faint. She looked up at him pathetically.

"I—I feel so queer," she murmured. "I think it must be a headache. Oh Mr. Smith, you haven't any bromo-seltzer, have you?"

Mr. Smith's face whitened with concern. "If you've got a headache you certainly shouldn't stay here in this blazing sun—should she, Miss Goldwin? *Couldn't* you just walk over to those trees? I haven't anything,—I'm awfully sorry,—but if I could help you over to the shade there, I could run up to that farmhouse and get you something."

"I—I don't believe I could," Ethelwyn answered. "I'll be all right in a few minutes. But if you could get me something! I've heard that a little salt codfish is good for headaches—maybe you could get that if they haven't any bromo-seltzer. I've heard ever so many people speak of codfish."

"I'll try," he answered earnestly. "Do keep up your courage, Miss Dill, I'll be right back—I will indeed!"

He rushed off, ruthlessly crushing violets at every stride. When he had vanished around a curve in the road, Ethelwyn looked at me. Her face was really white.

"Now we've got to go," she said; "there's nothing else for it—fisherman or no fisherman. Walk right close behind me, Cousin Persis, and be sure and spread out your skirts."

I walked and I spread. It was not easy hurrying in this fashion, but we did it; as soon as we were beyond the fisherman's angle of accurate vision (he had not lifted his eyes from his book all the time) we stopped and Ethelwyn pulled on her shoes and stockings. Then she looked at me, her face a mixture of emotions.

"Cousin Persis," she said solemnly, "at my very last Sunday in

the Bible-class at home we discussed whether a lie was ever justifiable. I took the negative!"

There was nothing to reply to that; it is a fashion life has of toppling over our ideals. Ethelwyn sighed and looked troubled. In a moment, however, her hopeful spirit reasserted itself.

"Anyway," she said, "I did have a headache. The sun and—and—the excitement gave it to me; and I *couldn't* go, could I? And I'll eat some of the codfish—if he brings any—if it chokes me."

She swallowed her words heroically. Mr. Smith appeared, breathless, with a bundle under his arm. I should think that he had brought a pound of codfish. Ethelwyn took her dose with sublime courage; that is to say, she ate half a dozen mouthfuls and insisted upon Mr. Smith's eating a like number; the rest she tore into strips and threw into the creek. The fisherman had left then, but she had hopes of his catching something farther down stream.

And, after all, Mr. Smith didn't spoil the day. He was a simple, straightforward, lovable boy, and he entered into it all amazingly. Besides, he was under the spell of enchantment; he too had come into fairyland, and he alone had found the princess. So they two wandered and laughed and joked and sang, and I kept my secret with the violets.

"Oh, I don't want to go home," I cried, when, all too soon, the shadows crept across the meadow.

Ethelwyn laughed back over her shoulder. "We're not going home," she said, "we're just walking."

And, after all, when I reached home I found it so inexpressibly dear and beautiful I could scarcely believe that something new and lovely had not happened there. It had not. It was just I that was so steeped in gladness; and over and over in my heart rang a line of Whittier's,—

"God gave a perfect day."

MAY 27.

At present Ethelwyn is chiefly interested in birds—chiefly, I mean, of natural objects. Her resolute pursuit of knowledge has proved so contagious that Mrs. Bassett and I have abandoned all lesser pursuits and spend every spare moment poring over the pages devoted to warblers, which we never shall conquer if we live to be a hundred, and sparrows, which are ten times worse. As the result of her enthusiasm a sort of ornithological revival has swept across the neighborhood, and our callers all talk Birds. No, not quite all—there are exceptions; when, upon Ethelwyn's pathetically wondering why the wood-warblers were so named when they can do nothing but squeak, Roger heartlessly suggested that it might be because they would warble if they could, we all declared that such a remark revealed an attitude of mind wholly lacking in the reverence due the subject, and that, thereafter, no

inducements would make us mention so much as a crow in his presence—a resolve we have since kept with heroic fortitude.

However, as I said, we have had no lack of callers to whom we could—and did—hold forth upon the charmed theme. Indeed, we have even had a Field Day, though that, like greatness, was thrust upon me. When Ethelwyn calmly announced one morning that “they”—I was not enlightened as to whom the “they” included—had decided to have a Field Day and invite everyone who was interested in birds, the audacity of the proceeding almost took my breath away.

“Ethelwyn Dill, how in the world are you going to manage them?” I cried. “It will be about as harmonious a gathering as Noah had in the ark.”

“I never thought of that,” Ethelwyn replied, slightly daunted. “I’m afraid that some of them *don’t* precisely fit. However,” gathering courage, “you know how it is when you are absorbed in some great purpose—differences are always forgotten. Why, that is one of the most magnificent things in life, Cousin Persis.”

“I suppose so,” I replied doubtfully. “Still, I think, on the whole, I’d trust more to the lunch, Ethelwyn.”

“But we weren’t going to take any lunch,” Ethelwyn returned, a little alarmed by my view of the situation. “It was to be a purely scientific excursion.”

I thought hard for a moment. “We might have lunch afterwards to celebrate our discoveries,” I suggested, and that is the way that it was finally decided.

Of course, everybody came—I think there were nineteen of us altogether: there was young Mr. Ordway, who was something of an ornithologist and wished himself a hundred times more of one that he might hope to prolong Ethelwyn’s course; Dr. Walnut (I believe I have mentioned Dr. Walnut; he has been calling only two weeks or so), who trailed along glowering darkly at the ornithologist, and labored under the delusion that a yellow-hammer was a carpenter’s tool; a young lady of uncertain age, who impressed it upon us that she had taken up the study seriously, and talked of the hours she put in before breakfast until Mrs. Bassett innocently remarked, “Dear heart, it must be real hard on you to have to work like that,” when she grew suddenly red—and silent; a nice old lady, who came to chaperone somebody or other—or perhaps it was all of us—and brought a bagful of fancywork on her arm, and a dozen others, all of whom were interested in birds—or Ethelwyn: generally, I believe, it was Ethelwyn.

Fortunately, we had arranged to eat lunch upon our piazza on our return. Minerva was to set out tables in our absence, so that we were not burdened with baskets. This, as I said, was most fortunate, for when we tried to keep one eye glued to the glass in order to distinguish



the number of toes of some bird serenely journeying through the tree-tops, and the other eye and hand divided between the bird-book, which never would open at the right place, and our note-books, in which our frenzied records resembled nothing so much as bird-tracks, we found ourselves ill-disposed towards any unnecessary impedimenta. Indeed, I had no idea when I looked at the procession that any bird would stay within a mile of us. I had much to learn. I now thoroughly believe that birds are possessed of a well-developed sense of humor. Migrants that the most patient searching had failed to discover before that morning fluttered all about us, and breakfasted leisurely before our eyes, and made daring flights over our heads, while we—the ones that had come for birds, that is—called each other wildly to look a dozen ways a minute, and began frantic records that we hadn't time to finish, or tried to identify seven birds at once and grew so distracted that we actually stood and argued over an English sparrow! If birds ever laugh, their sides must have ached that day. And far down the road, ambling deliberately after us, her reticule on her arm and a stream of brilliant colors pouring down her dress, came the chaperone, knitting a stripe of a Roman afghan!

As the morning grew warmer, however, the enthusiasm waned perceptibly, all except Ethelwyn's and, presumably, the ornithologist's. I say presumably, for we had scarcely seen them since we started out; they had a way of getting just ahead around a curve, and it was amazing, the number of curves in that road. Dr. Walnut meanwhile sat about on rocks and stopped his mouth with his cane and sulked, once in a while darkly unstopping himself to point to a "robin," which it never by any chance was. Gradually the rest of the party drifted in and settled down in the shade. Nobody seemed inclined to talk much. Indeed, the only really serene member of the party was the chaperone, who, having found a convenient log and examined it for ticks, turned up her skirt with enviable composure and proceeded to knit at ease.

To this silent party returned Ethelwyn, radiant.

"Why, how quiet everybody is!" she exclaimed blithely. "Are we the last? I didn't mean to go so far, but we were following a Kentucky warbler. It has the loveliest song!"

The responses to this outburst were so moderately enthusiastic as to impress even Ethelwyn. She glanced at me imploringly, but I refused to be melted. I informed her mutely that I had told her so. It was Mrs. Bassett who came to the rescue.

"I never was no great," she said, looking cheerfully about at the silent groups, "to go by clock time, I'd a heap rather mind my feelin's. I dunno how you folks are, but *I'm* hungry. S'posin' we go back an' get some lunch?"

\* It was a stroke of genius—the one appeal that could have harmonized the discontented factions. With a single impulse we rose and started homeward, our spirits restored by the magic word. It was exactly half-past ten.

Since then I've noticed we have not discussed birds quite so exclusively. Only Mrs. Bassett, who has a genius for enthusiasm, has pursued the subject with undiminished delight. She has fastened up a whole row of gourds on her piazza for the wrens, who accepted them immediately and sing regularly every three seconds through the whole day. From below she watches their housekeeping with the keenest interest. She is like a wren herself with her quick motions and her bright glances and unfailing cheer—perhaps that is why they come to her so quickly.

But it seems there are tragedies even among wrens. Yesterday afternoon we found her standing under one of the gourds, her small face dark with indignation.

"Dearie," she said to Ethelwyn, "would you mind climbing up and looking in there—the end one, I mean? I ain't quite so spry as I used to be, else I'd do it myself."

Ethelwyn obeyed, wondering. As her head rose opposite the entrance of the nest a bird flew out; it looked unusually large and clumsy; Ethelwyn stared at it a moment before she realized.

"Why, Mrs. Bassett," she cried, "it's an English sparrow—in your wren's house!"

"They drove the wrens out," Mrs. Bassett replied grimly. "I heard a great racket here four or five days ago, but I couldn't find what 'twas about. There was so many wrens here that I didn't mistrust till just now, when I saw that sparrow-critter fly in. Is there any eggs, dearie?"

Ethelwyn peered into the nest. "Three," she replied.

Mrs. Bassett nodded; her appearance was that of one who has unearthed some monstrous villany.

"Hand 'em down," she ordered. "Do it careful—I don't want they should be broken. I've got water already boiling," she added.

We stared at her in bewilderment, but evidently it was not the time for explanations. She received silently the speckled eggs that Ethelwyn handed down to her.

"You jest stay if 'tain't keepin' you from anything," she said. "I'll be back in five minutes."

Of course, we staid; we wouldn't have gone for worlds till the mystery was solved. In a little over five minutes Mrs. Bassett returned. Her dark mood had vanished and her eyes were full of laughter; she still held the eggs in her hand.

"I'll trouble you to put 'em back if you don't mind," she said,  
VOL. LXX.—2

giving them to Ethelwyn. Ethelwyn took them and started so that she almost dropped them.

"Why, Mrs. Bassett," she exclaimed, "they're hot!"

Mrs. Bassett nodded. "Boiled," she said briefly. "I thought if that sparrow wanted to set," she added, after enjoying the sensation she had created, "she might jest as well have her fill of settin' while she was about it."

It was several days before we saw Mrs. Bassett again. When we did we eagerly inquired about the sparrow. She looked apologetic.

"Well, there," she acknowledged, "I guess 'twas a lesson for me. I thought I was smart, but I've learned that an English sparrow is smarter. What do you s'pose they did? *Went and built right over those boiled eggs!* They did so—built another nest right on top of the first one. I had father pull the whole thing out then. I told him if they did that, I didn't know but they'd be capable of hatchin' out boiled eggs—anyway, I wasn't goin' to risk it. I've learned my lesson. There's one thing I ain't never goin' to give any quarter to, an' that's an English sparrow."

"And the next blizzard——" I suggested wickedly.

But she was too quick for me. "They warn't sparrows then," she retorted, "they was jest—*birds!*"

JUNE 2.

We have had an epidemic of visitors lately, and visitors in Arden are against the laws of nature. Either people belong here, in which case they know it and we know it the moment they look at those western hills, and we give them the clue to every secret way, or—they *don't*. And if you don't, a thousand-years' residence would not be long enough to confer the right of citizenship. Dr. Walnut has been the worst. Since that bird expedition he has haunted us like an uneasy ghost. Once he came to pick a daisy—it was so long, he declared, until we (we!) taught him, since he had gotten close to nature. Ethelwyn took him over on the hilltop, where a million daisies, twisting their tiny necks to follow the sun, face the east in the morning and the west at dusk. He stared in bewilderment.

"Which daisy shall I pick?" he gasped.

"That," said Ethelwyn gravely, "is the important question."

It isn't so bad in the daytime—I can find things to do then—pressing tasks when a moment's delay would be fatal. But when he comes out in the evening, and plumps down into one of our beautiful twilight hours when we are sitting silent with the shadows and sweet, sleepy night-sounds, perfectly, blissfully happy—then I find it hard to forgive him—or Ethelwyn. He appeared the other night when we had been off all day gypsying and came in sunburned and wind-blown and ready to drop. We had curled up in the hammock and were watch-

ing the dusk blot out our world, and the white stars prick through overhead and deepen to gold, and the soft stir of the balm of Gilead at the gate, and we were full of unspeakable content. Then, as I said, Dr. Walnut came. I tried to slip away, but Ethelwyn grasped my skirt and held me fast. So I sat there grim and silent. There should be no hypocrisy about me, at least. Dr. Walnut should not think that *I* approved of him. Gradually, finding that I was utterly forgotten, I was drifting to the edge of content again, when something heavy fell upon my shoulder. It proved to be Ethelwyn's head—tired out by the day, she had actually fallen asleep in the middle of a sentence. So I let her sleep, and I sat up and talked with the man till it suddenly occurred to me that Ethelwyn was really expecting too much of friendship. Wasn't I sleepy as well as she, and had I ever lured any man-destroyer of our peace within our gates? So then I poked Ethelwyn awake and took a nap myself. For two whole hours we sat there alternately pillowing and prodding each other. Through my dozes floated a consciousness that the conversation was of a fluctuating nature, flaming brilliantly during Ethelwyn's periods on duty, and waning during mine, but the man never guessed. At ten o'clock he rose to take a reluctant departure.

"I'm afraid we haven't been very entertaining," Ethelwyn said politely. "We're not always so stupid, but we'd been off all day, and that always has a bad effect upon our wits. It makes the conversation rather spotty—don't you think so?"

Dr. Walnut had noticed nothing peculiar about the conversation. Miss Ethelwyn—and her cousin (!)—were always so entertaining.

"I'm glad you think so," Ethelwyn returned. "Of course, I know that *I* was, but Cousin Persis hasn't generally that reputation. It must be that you are congenial souls."

The astounding ingratitude of this calm statement so took my breath away that I could find no words adequate to the situation. I thought, however, of several things that I would say to Ethelwyn as soon as we were alone; but when Dr. Walnut had finally torn himself away we were both so sleepy that I decided to wait until I could be more effective—in the morning, for instance. But this proved to be a matter in which fate itself was concerned; the very next morning Ethelwyn came to me in a state of splendid indignation.

"Oh, that Dr. Walnut!" she stormed.

I looked at her in surprise. "I thought that you thought he was 'nice,' Ethelwyn? And certainly last evening——"

She ignored last evening.

"So I did!" she rejoined in an injured voice, "not *very* nice, you know,—like people that know more,—but still perfectly gentlemanly and polite. I never imagined,—I'm a perfect goose to tell you, but I

just can't help it,—you know the little sorrel saddle-horse he bought the other day?"

"Yes," I answered expectantly.

Ethelwyn whirled about, eyes and cheeks ablaze. "Cousin Persis, he's gone and named her *Ethelwyn*!"

"Ethelwyn—he hasn't!"

Evidently my indignation was soothing: Ethelwyn loosed the barriers of her anger and the whole tide came sweeping down upon me.

"Yes, and that isn't all. He has a setter, and he has named her *Ethelwyn*, and an Angora, and *she's* named Ethelwyn. I've no doubt that if he chances to have any fancy pigeons or—or—a Berkshire pig they will all be named Ethelwyn. Did you ever hear anything so perfectly preposterous in your whole life?"

"I never did hear of quite such a wholesale naming," I returned. I was very much ashamed of myself—it seemed brutally heartless with those tearful blue eyes pleading for sympathy, and yet the thought of Ethelwyn's trotting and barking and mewling about the smitten Dr. Walnut was too much for my gravity.

Ethelwyn's lips quivered. "Yes, laugh!" she cried—"do! I didn't think it of *you*. I do think that I am the most unfortunate girl! Things are always happening to me that never do to anybody else, and I can't help it—I don't do anything to make them! One thing is certain—when Dr. Walnut comes here again you will have to see him, for I shall have a headache. If he comes a thousand times, I shall have a thousand headaches. It will be true too—the very sound of the man's name makes it ache furiously. Just think—I heard it from Minerva! Somebody—I think she said a cousin of her sister's husband—works for Dr.—for that man's mother—and told her. Imagine how I feel to have them talking me over! I think he deserves to be Coventried—don't you?"

"Yes, I do," I agreed seriously, "but I think one other thing too, Ethelwyn. If only you wouldn't be quite so nice to—to people when they first come, it—they—things, you know, mightn't be quite so unpleasant as they sometimes are afterwards."

It was a lamentable failure. I had meant to say it very kindly and wisely and firmly, but I hadn't counted upon the aggrieved reproach in Ethelwyn's eyes.

"Why, I don't!" she cried—"I don't *ever*! Only I can't help being interested in people, can I?"

I gave it up.

After all, both ludicrous and annoying as the incident is, it is not without a large measure of comfort, since it closely foreshadows an exit Dr. Walnut. Of course, I realize that Ethelwyn is one to whom, by some law as inevitable as gravitation, things are bound to "hap-



pen." I am confidently assured that there could be no break in their happening if she were the sole survivor upon a desert island. Equally, of course, after an intimate acquaintance with her covering the twenty-one years of her existence, Cousin Tom must understand this and could not hold me responsible if any particular thing should happen. Yet, at the same time, I wish that he were here. Roger is no good at all: he simply sits and laughs at me in the most irritating fashion in the world: he says that Ethelwyn is a blessing to me—that she is shaking me out of ruts. I can well believe that—*ruts* and Ethelwyn! It isn't that I'm thinking of, or of myself at all, but of the responsibility. Now there are young Mr. Smith—a nice boy, only, of course, his name is against him—or his lack of name—and the ornithologist, who is a fine young fellow in every way, and comes generally the evenings when Mr. Smith doesn't. Well, at least, there is one consolation—there is no longer any Dr. Walnut!

JUNE 7.

I wish that I could share Ethelwyn with all the poor creatures who have never learned that there is such a thing as nature in the world, and so suffer day after day the miserable agonies of ennui! She came into my room to-night with a bit of paper in her hand.

"It's something I've puzzled and puzzled over," she said. "It seems perfectly clear, and yet I can't quite make it out. I suppose it's me—I never did understand poetry very well—but it seems as if I ought to this. Of course you'll see through it as easily as if it were window glass."

Beguiled by such delicate flattery, I attacked the verses with a high heart; there were four of them, and they looked very simple.

"I passed through a garden and plucked a rose  
With crimson petals lapped fold on fold;  
I watched them open hour by hour,  
Till I saw at last the heart of gold.

"The sky was gray and the rain sobbed loud,  
My life was full of bliss untold;  
I walked in a mist of fragrance rare  
That was woven for me from that heart of gold.

"But the sweet life fled from the crimson rose,  
The warm, soft petals fell fast—fell soon,  
And only a haunting perfume told  
Of the beautiful Life I had plucked in June.

"I said, 'I will pluck another rose.  
The flowers were fair—birds sung in tune.  
I passed through the garden—no rose could I find,  
And a voice cried, 'Fool, 'tis not always June.'"

Ethelwyn watched me with curious interest.

"Well?" she interrogated when my silence had outlasted her patience.

It was humiliating, but I had to confess.

"I'm sure I can't tell, Ethelwyn, unless it means lost love; it's safe enough to guess that. It's what ninety-nine out of a hundred of the mysterious ones do mean. What in the world made you copy the thing, anyway?"

But Ethelwyn shook her head. "No," she said positively, "it doesn't mean lost love."

I stared at her in astonishment. "If you know so well, why do you come to me? And how do you know? Unless"—the natural solution dawning upon me—"it's something Dr. Walnut gave you. Really, it's better than I should have expected of him, even if it isn't as clear as the multiplication-table."

"Thank you," Ethelwyn observed with a noticeable lack of enthusiasm. "I'm glad you think it better than Dr. Walnut could have done. I should be sorry if you didn't. And I spoke positively because—well, you see, I wrote it myself, and I might be supposed to know what I *didn't* mean, mightn't I, even if I couldn't exactly tell what I did?"

I stared at the child in consternation.

"*You*, Ethelwyn——"

"That's what I said," that young lady returned briskly. "But you needn't look that way over it, Cousin Persis—it was merely a scientific experiment."

"I—I don't believe I understand, Ethelwyn," I acknowledged meekly.

"I think very likely you don't—I was quite sure of it when you said 'lost love.' As if *I'd* ever write about lost love! Why, you see it was this way: I picked up a magazine the other day and there were some verses in it that sounded ever so pretty,—all about spring and shadows and sorrow, you know,—some of the lines were just lovely. I thought I'd learn it sometime when I didn't have anything else to do; so I read it over again, and then I found I hadn't the least idea what it was all about, and the more I read it the more tangled up I got. Then I grew provoked at myself for being so stupid, and I took the old thing up to my room and worked over it ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes at night, the way you do over French or anything when you want to improve yourself. But it just grew foggier and foggier, till finally I got really mad. I knew anybody could write a thing like that, and that was why I did it—to prove it, you see. Some of the lines aren't quite so smooth as the others, but it's pretty good, I think! And I proved what I set out to—that you can write poetry without in the least knowing what it's all about."

"Ye-es," I returned doubtfully. Naturally, one hesitates to accept such a startling theory of criticism without a little consideration.

"Only," Ethelwyn added thoughtfully, "it had one result that I hadn't in the least foreseen."

"And that?"

"Why, that I'm perfectly wild to know what I meant myself."

JUNE 20.

I brought home my last armful of daisies to-night. Eight times I've filled the old glass pitcher with them, by which I know that I've counted a month of summer days. These last, though I hunted far for the youngest ones, have grown old and weary; they no longer have strength to climb above the hurrying grasses. The days are growing quieter too; there are bird-songs still, but no more of the sweet, irrepressible tumult with which meadow and woods have been ringing for two months past; the hour of magic madness is gone; the world by contrast seems strangely tame and middle-aged.

Our life has followed the course of nature and sobered down considerably of late. Partly, no doubt, it is the heat, which has a subduing effect upon even the finest enthusiasms; partly it is—circumstances! The ornithologist has suddenly stopped coming. I made some remark about it to Ethelwyn, and she turned rosy and went to her closet to look for—a cup, I believe she said. I refrained from reminding her that cups are more frequently to be found in the china closet in the dining-room.

Mr. Smith has not stopped calling,—at least, I have no reason to suppose that he has,—but he has been summoned North by the death of a brother; of course, we still have not infrequent visitors, but nothing for "stiddy wear," as Mrs. Bassett says. We have not even Roger to enliven us, as he is off on one of the trips.

For some days past Ethelwyn has been a trifle restless; she is not used to having so much time idle on her hands. I could see that it was the divine discontent that always accompanies the evolution of some new plan, and I waited the hour of revelation. It came in due season. We were out on the piazza after dinner, and the dusk had been creeping closer and closer till it drifted like a shadowy veil between us. Ethelwyn was sitting on the top step, her chin propped on one hand while with the other she absently pulled dry twigs from the honeysuckle beside her.

"Somehow it makes me think of my babies, to-night," she remarked dreamily.

I was startled into sitting up.

"Your—I beg your pardon, Ethelwyn—I think I didn't understand."

"My babies," she repeated, raising her voice, "the ones I am going to adopt, you know. Didn't I tell you that I was going to keep an orphan asylum sometime? Only, I suppose, it will take money to run it—and there's Daddy—I'm afraid he wouldn't exactly approve. Of course, I couldn't spoil things for Daddy. But think how lovely it would be to have nice, dirty, noisy little boys—I think I'd prefer boys—clattering up and down stairs and digging in the garden and dumping their treasures all over the house. Oh Cousin Persis, wouldn't it be *dear*?"

It came to me with sudden, heavy reproach. Down in the hot town was the great red brick building, and the bare, hard-trodden, brick-walled yard, and a hundred and fifty restless little creatures shut within it. And up here the wide, sweet fields, and cool, whispering gladness of the woods, and a tiny, laughing brown stream that sang in the night.

"Ethelwyn," I cried, "we will do it!"

"Do what?" she returned. "Why, Cousin Persis, you're all excited. What do you mean?"

"Just what you said—I don't see why I never thought of it in all these years! There's the whole orphan asylum, Ethelwyn, and I know the superintendent. We will go down to-morrow and pick out our babies—one for you and one for me—to keep through all the hot time. After that—well, after that will be time enough to decide."

Ethelwyn flashed about on me. I couldn't see, but I knew that her eyes were like stars, for even her voice was shining.

"You'll go and pick out the very prettiest little girl of them all—one that has golden hair and a cherubic mouth!" she taunted me. "I know you. I've seen you look at babies—pretty babies!"

"At least I won't make eyes at the most impressionable little boy, as you will. I'm almost afraid, after all, that it will be my duty to warn the superintendent, Ethelwyn."

"Wait and see," she laughed back. "He sha'n't be impressionable—I hate impressionable boys. He shall be bullet-headed and—and *tough*. The kind that would pull the cat's tail, if we had a cat, and throw stones at birds and dig wells in your flower-gardens. And I shall train him with such exemplary wisdom and firmness that all the world will wonder."

She sat up, hugging her knees with delight; and then we fell to planning. We were going to be very discreet. We would take them only for two weeks at first, and would ask the superintendent's advice, and get directions from her as to clothing and diet. The one point upon which we were adamant was that they must be *little* children, the kind that you could cuddle up in your arms and sing to in the hour between twilight and dark, "the wishing time of night," that was made for children as much as spring-tides were made for robins.

After we went upstairs I thought Ethelwyn called me, and I opened the door between our rooms. She was standing at her window looking down into the garden all brimmed with moonlight, and she was singing an old lullaby. I closed the door softly—she did not move or hear me.

JUNE 25.

We have our babies. We have been in each other's rooms a dozen times to look at them—the boy lying with the careless, unconscious grace of a young animal, his witching smile curving his lips even in sleep; the girl with her baby brows drawn sharply together, and her tiny hand clenched against the world.

It didn't happen just the way we expected. We went down at bed-time to choose, since it was, somehow, bed-time babies that we were hungriest for. The great red brick Asylum opened its mouth and swallowed us up without winking—glad things and sad things are all alike to it. We followed the superintendent up to the babies' nursery, where all the children under five sleep together. The room was full of small white bipeds that, in their little leg-nightgowns, looked exactly like funny plucked birds. Some of them were sitting in the tiny chairs at the foot of the cots, some were in the hands of older girls—being plucked! Suddenly, at a signal, they all came to the nurse and stood about her in a still, white circle, their little hands folded and their eyes closed. So they recited their "Now I lay me" and the Twenty-third Psalm. Then, without a sound, they were all swarming about us, thrusting warm, eager fingers into ours, and lifting confident faces for kisses.

Ethelwyn got down on the floor and opened her arms wide and tried to gather them all in.

"Oh, how can children grow up without a mother to kiss them good-night?" she sobbed.

The children looked at her wonderingly. One wee boy put out a finger and touched her cheek.

"Lady's kying," he said in an awe-struck tone.

"That's only a wet smile," answered Ethelwyn, kissing the curious finger-tips, and then she laughed to prove it.

In a moment the tiny, crowding white ghosts melted away. They mounted the chairs and climbed over the foot-boards, and so tumbled into their cribs. Before we could get around many of them were asleep. One was not—it was the Boy with his happy eyes and confident smile. He was sitting up in his crib, waiting, and when I reached him put up his small arms for another kiss. I could not resist it—children stick to Ethelwyn like burrs wherever she goes, but usually they are shy with me.

"I must have this one," I said.



Ethelwyn gave me a look—it was a look that said a great many things.

"It *isn't* a pretty little golden-haired girl," I protested weakly.

She turned to the superintendent with a fine disregard of my presence.

"Will you please to show me," she said, as if she were demanding to see cotton cloth for sheeting, "the very homeliest and naughtiest little girl that you have?"

The superintendent looked half puzzled, half amused, but she spoke with quick tenderness.

"These are babies—babies can't be 'naughtiest.'"

"If they can't be naughty, then as naughty as they can," laughed Ethelwyn.

The superintendent's face had changed and she stood thoughtful for a moment.

"There is one," she replied. "She has been here six months and we cannot yet make her play with or even speak to other children. I think that she is homesick, although she can't put it into words. She is only four."

"Show her to me," Ethelwyn said with a quick breath. And when the superintendent led the way to the crib where Rosella lay, her moist baby lips just apart, her brows, even in sleep, drawn together as if in pain, Ethelwyn put out her hands impulsively. Then she drew them back and said simply,—

"We will come for them in the morning."

So in the morning we went and came home with our babies and a bundle of clothes apiece. The Boy tucked his hand confidently in mine and smiled comradeship at every leaf and flower, but Rosella walked stolidly, clutching Ethelwyn's dress, and as silent as the sphinx. Ethelwyn turned anxious eyes to me.

"Suppose she should be homesick with us?" she whispered.

"She couldn't," I returned securely, for I was under the spell of the Boy. But Ethelwyn shook her head, and her eyes were shadowed with doubt.

Fortunately, the dinner-bell rang as we entered the house, and we escorted our newly-acquired family directly to the dining-room, where, by dint of piling small libraries in their chairs we made them visible above the table-edge. Our doubts vanished then. If Rosella was homesick, it certainly had not affected her appetite; she ate on and on, grinding away with mechanical perseverance, her eyes rolling gravely from one to the other of us, but not a word breaking her silence. Indeed, she couldn't talk—she was too busy. But we ceased to worry. The thrill of assured success was ours.

In the afternoon we turned the children loose, while we, upon the

piazza where we could keep a watchful eye upon their progress, investigated the bundles committed to our charge.

Ethelwyn scornfully held up a much-beruffled white dress!

"Look at that," she cried, "for the Forest of Arden! She shall not touch it! She shall live in pinafores and revel in dirt and have her face washed but once a day—and that only as a concession to custom."

She tossed the little, cheap, flimsy thing aside, and then drew it back and folded it gently.

"I suppose her mother worked so hard for it," she apologized, flushing at my smile. "The superintendent said her mother was living, didn't she?"

Hers and the Boy's too."

Ethelwyn looked down at the two children absorbed in the ecstasy of mud-pies in the middle of the path.

"Oh, what a hard world it can be!" she cried.

JULY 9.

Our babies grow more delightfully satisfactory every hour. Rosella's shyness has worn off completely and she chatters and sings the whole day long. Yesterday it rained in the afternoon, and for three blessed hours that child played on the piazza, singing over and over her one little improvised chant of two notes with a slur in the middle—"It's way-ning—it's way-ning."

It grew to be maddeningly monotonous, but haven't we heard a robin sing his song as insistently for three hours at a stretch?

This has been the first wet day; for all the past two weeks they've been tramping from dawn till dark. Such perfectly insatiable appetites we never imagined—I'm sure *I* never had anything like them when I was a child. Not only do they have three full meals and an in-between one, but before the second day was passed they had found the way to the kitchen and to Minerva's favor. One morning she supplied them each with an enchanting cooky in the form of a rooster. After that she was besieged hourly for "takes;" and after a whole day of repeated favors Rosella, dizzied by success, had an inspiration. She presented herself at the kitchen door yet again, and lifted her grave face with its pathetically drooping mouth.

"Lord love you, honey, yo' isn't come back for anudder?" cried Minerva in genuine amazement.

Rosella answered something. Her voice, except when she is singing, is very low. Minerva leaned down to her.

"What is it, honey? Say it ag'in. Yo' ain' close nuff to dese ol' yeres o' mine."

Rosella's serious eyes widened and she raised her voice.

"Want *two* takes," she repeated firmly.

And all this is besides the blackberries, of which, judging from the condition of their faces and clothes, they must consume bushels daily. Apparently, strawberries have been the fruit which has most impressed their imaginations hitherto, for they persist in calling them "black 'trawberries." But as long as they are growing rosier and fatter and merrier every day, what do we care? We carry out systematically Ethelwyn's theory as to dirt; or, rather, we *do* wash their faces more than once a day, but we desist until the stain becomes so dark that we have fears of its being permanent; then we rush for soap. And after all our careful negligence, the blow we received the other day from the Boy! We had been playing with the children, and finally dropped down on the steps, breathless and dishevelled. The Boy stood in front of us critically. Presently he gave his verdict. Pointing courteously (the Boy is always courteous—he is one of those fortunate beings who are born so and cannot, if they would, forswear their charm) to Ethelwyn, whose hair was slightly more negligee than mine, "I guess," he remarked in his sweet little sing-song voice, "I guess I like her hair worser'n your hair!"

After which, what could we do but flee to our rooms and act upon the gentle reproof?

I must acknowledge, however, that, with all the exquisite joy of it, we are also learning the sorrows of bringing up a family; it is astounding to contemplate the depth of ingratitude in those two small beings. Haven't we bestowed blandishments, and Minerva cookies, enough upon those children to win the undying devotion of a whole regiment of ordinarily constituted individuals? Yet again and again we become conscious of great, warm summer silences where the small, shrill voices had been, and, glancing up, ten to one we behold two pairs of sturdy legs vanishing through Mrs. Bassett's door. Boy has even discovered a gap in the hedge of more alluring mystery than the one usually employed between the two houses, and with marvellous rapidity he and Rosella have beaten a well-defined path through it. With a sweet but wholly unyielding determination, he guards this way of delight from the profanation of older feet. It is for him alone, he declares with a smile which strips the statement of all discourtesy, and makes one wonder by what happy gift of the gods one is favored with such delicious confidences. But none of us who gazed daily upon the magic path ever dreamed with what new and startling emphasis its existence might be forced upon our consciousness.

It was the second Sunday at church. The hot summer distances were too long for little feet, so that these Sundays that the children have been with us we have taken them to a tiny chapel near by, a friendly, simple little place, loved of the sweet west winds and tender shadows. The Family behaved with such decorum the first time—

Rosella promptly toppling over to a nap in Ethelwyn's lap, and the Boy sitting gravely with wide, reverent eyes—that we were puffed up with pride, as if, somehow, the Asylum training reflected honor upon us. This ideal lasted through the first morning and half through the second. By that time Rosella's moist, pink face was buried in Ethelwyn's dress, and the Boy was watching a violet butterfly that drifted in the open window with a message from the glowing world outside. But Boy was listening. The minister's voice, a trifle drowsy from the heat, or possibly influenced by the soporific picture presented to his view by his sweltering audience, announced solemnly,—

“There are paths that all of us must walk alone!”

Instantly Boy was on his feet, his eyes shining and his tongue tripping with eagerness. His shrill little voice overrode the minister's.

“Yes—yes!” he cried ecstatically.

Merciful Heaven! What dark depths of anguish will people think that baby has been sounding! Above all, will they think that *we* are the ones who have so deepened his experiences?

Naturally our Family prove a subject of extensive interest to our callers. For a while, until we drew up a series of rules and regulations for the guidance of too enthusiastic visitors, they were in serious danger of having their stomachs ruined for life. It wasn't strange: a box of candy was a small price to pay for the privilege of seeing Ethelwyn with them—to say nothing of their own sufficient charms. As for Roger, with a keenness of penetration equalled only by their transactions with Minerva, they adopted him at sight without fear or favor, and hail his every approach with clamorous shouts of “Woger” that are enough to shake the very treetops. No man could by any possibility resist such flattery. He comes up every night. If visitors follow, he coaxes the children off to the end of the garden, where shrieks of merriment prove the undoing of my manners. I resist as long as I can, but it is only a question of moments before I flee too. As for the evenings when no caller darkens our horizon, I often think what a charming family group we must make together. My own position in the portrait is slightly in doubt. I should prefer to rank as maiden aunt, but as they are not popular in groups, I suppose that I must pose as grandmother. I have conscientious scruples in assuming the role, but really there seems no other open to me. But perhaps if I practise enough, I shall surprise everybody by making a brilliant success of it. The day has passed—fortunately for me—when grandmothers have to know how to knit!

JULY 29.

. It has been hot and hot! Morning after morning has come close—sultry—breathless. Flowers droop, trees hang limp; so early as half-past nine yesterday I saw a pair of thrashers in the pool of shade

made by some blackberry-bushes panting with outstretched wings. One cannot escape the fancy that nature has run out of new days and is serving us stale and wilted ones of other years. One can do nothing in such weather except sit down and entertain what philosophy one possesses and wish that it were more, and even the wish is not enthusiastic. I was afraid of the effect upon Ethelwyn, and had a guilty feeling that I ought to take her away somewhere for the next two months, though at the thought I feel such thrills of terror go up and down my spine as a turtle might experience if some kindly-disposed person suggested relieving him of his shell. But Ethelwyn's cheerfulness is proof against even a Washington summer. Her remedies spring up new every morning. The latest is to slip on a wrapper of some thin white stuff that looks as if it might be woven moonlight, and creep into the coolest and darkest corner of the library with a bowl of cracked ice at her elbow and read "Farthest North." She declares that under these conditions she is actually able to shiver for half an hour at a time, an occasional clinking of the ice serving as an encourager to the imagination. This she calls reading realistically, and urges me to acquire the art. But I lack the confidence. I think that I must be too old.

In all the heat, the only creatures untouched in our small world, or the slightly larger one visible from our piazza, are the Family. They play with undiminished ardor, following the shade about the yard as faithfully as sunflowers follow the sun, the only appreciable effect that the weather seems to have upon them being an increase in the demand for "takes." This is hard upon Minerva, but she is under the spell too, and submits with a patience nothing short of angelic.

What a pity it is that people can't carry their originality along with them when they grow up! Probably the Boy will be an utterly uninteresting man who will read the newspapers and grunt at his wife, and Rosella talk about nothing but bonnets and babies. Of course, I don't believe this in the least, in this case. I only say it to make Ethelwyn contradict me. Meantime they are not grown up, and monotony is a word not in their vocabulary.

Yesterday the whole Family, the Boy, Rosella, Tomato, and Eugenia, all burst in upon us at once. Tomato, I should explain, is a small tiger-kitten somewhat the worse for wear. Rosella found her out in the road one day, fell passionately in love with her at sight, and came in with her victim (christened Tomato upon the spot in loving memory of a favorite article of diet) clutched tightly about the middle, since which time the two have been inseparable, a band about Tomato's small body where the fur is noticeably worn testifying eloquently to the constancy of her mistress's affections. I should have interfered but that Tomato's kitten-heart seems to return the devotion, as she is always tagging at the Family's heels, and the further consideration that, in the



weather that we are now enjoying, the removal of superfluous fur must be a relief rather than otherwise.

As for Eugenia, she is of quite a different breed, her ladyship being composed of an old crib blanket rolled to convenient hugging size, with a generous sponge occupying the space usually assigned to brains in the human cranium. She is also possessed of well-defined features—composed of shoe buttons and bits of black lace—and is arrayed in an old apron of Minerva's which gracefully enshrouds her somewhat indefinite figure. But these charms are all rendered insignificant by the exceeding delight of the sponge-brains. Boy calls this portion of her anatomy her "top-mouth," and pours down it daily water enough to drown several ordinarily constituted infants.

The descent of the avalanche was so impetuous that I had only a confused consciousness of Tomato clawing my shoulder in a frantic attempt to gain foothold somewhere, and Eugenia's moist head bumping against my cheek; then I was in the thick of the subject.

"A litty-bitty baby," Rosella cried, her eyes wide with wonder.

"Des so big—and black," Boy chimed in his sweet sing-song—"black and all shiny."

"And we's can name it—her said so," Rosella fluttered breathlessly. "We's going name it to-day."

"And we thought——" Boy taking up the chant.

But I interrupted. My dull wits had not yet gotten it clear whether the litty-bitty baby was a beetle or a puppy, the only two black things I could think of at the moment; it proved to be neither, but a newly-arrived picaninny in a tiny darky cabin down the road. I was conscious of a respectful wonder as to when the Family could have gotten so intimately acquainted with our neighbors, but I had no time to meditate upon the subject. Boy's bewitching smile flashed confidently up at me, and I always yield before that smile.

"What did you say, dear Boy?" I asked.

"I said we fought we'd name her Marier, after their cat," he replied, his eyes holding mine steadily. Under the circumstances what was there to do but gravely to assure them that I considered the name a very pretty one and a graceful way of paying tribute to the family cat? I supposed that then I should have rest for a few minutes from abstruse problems, but rest was not to be yet. Boy, in his dear, loving fashion, reached up his mouth for a kiss. Having received it, he was turning away, content, when a question brought him to a halt. He pondered it gravely for a moment, and then, finding it beyond his power, came back to me with the touching confidence in my ability which countless failures never seem to dim in the least.

"Dear Miss Persis," he asked earnestly, "what makes a kiss? Is it the lips or is it the *spit*?"

Bless those children. How did I ever live without them!

AUGUST 3.

Yesterday afternoon the wind began to blow—heavy, hot blasts that sent clouds of yellow dust whirling above the treetops; the sultry weather had been bad enough, but this seemed almost unendurable, and, to make it worse, towards four o'clock great cool, gray clouds, with rain in their arms, climbed the horizon and then went around to the north. But, after all, we did get some—not much, but a little; in a flash the whole world seemed to leap into our eyes—so vivid was each leaf and blade, washed of its dust; and, oh, the sweetness that swept down the air—that utterly ineffable breath of wet woods and fields!

And the next morning was glorious. It was no wonder that Ethelwyn woke to find an eager plan whispering at her ear: if she hadn't, I should have. We were to spend the whole beautiful green day down by the creek.

The Family in high glee immediately retired to the lilacs to consult in regard to the best method of conveyance for Tomato and Eugenia. Ethelwyn went off to get ready, and I to hunt up boxes and oiled paper and dishes that could be left upon the field of battle.

From the kitchen Minerva's rich voice—a dusky twilight voice she has when she sings—floated up in haunting cadences. The children's high, sweet chatter sounded in contrast like the chirping of insects.

Suddenly, as I stood at the window looking out, such an overwhelming sense of the joy and beauty the old world holds came upon me that it seemed as if the very heaven had opened and something unspeakably glad and beautiful folded about one. A couple of women were coming up the road, their limp calico skirts trailing over the wet grass. I felt such a passion of pity for them, not because of their poverty,—the word had no meaning under such a sky,—but because they could trudge along so indifferently, as if there were no great, glad trees or shining clouds within a thousand miles.

Five minutes later Minerva's face, heavily creased with perplexity, appeared in the doorway.

"Dey's two folkses wants to see you," she announced.

"What kind of folks?" I asked, my head in the closet in a search for boxes.

"Deed, Miss, I dunno; dey ain't quality—dat's certain; daon' rightly 'pear lak day's beggars; seem's lak dey's mighty frustrated ober sumpin'. Reckon I better send dem 'bout dey's business, Miss Persis?"

"Certainly not," I returned severely. "Go and tell them—but there's no need of telling them anything, I'll go myself."

I ran downstairs more curious than anything else; it was the first time since Minerva had dawned upon our horizon that she had failed

to classify callers at a glance. When I recognized the two women whom I had seen from the window I was scarcely less perplexed than she. They were waiting, awkwardly enough, in the hall. One—the small, sharp-eyed one—standing alert and defiant; the other, larger, limp, and untidy, and yet with something of charm still dimly making itself felt, looking about irresolutely, as if she wanted to retreat but lacked the courage. She greeted me with a friendly smile, but the small one acknowledged my presence only by a scanty nod, and began to speak at once, rather, it struck me, from reluctance to delay a pleasant experience than from any urgency or embarrassment.

"Miss Goldwin, I take it? I'm Mis' Hoolan, meself, an' this is me friend, Mis' Daley. I never was one to beat about the bush, an' I ain't goin' to begin now. I s'pose you're wondering what we've come for. Well, I'll tell you: we've come for our children—that's what we've come for."

I echoed in helpless repetition, "For your—*children!*"

"Yes, ma'am, that's what I said, ma'am, an' I ain't one to go back on my spoken word, ma'am. Yesterday I went up to the Asylum to see me Rosella. Mebbe you think a mother likes to have her child at the Asylum—an' her the youngest of six! Folks that ain't never had any of their own can't know much about it." (This was evidently, from her snapping eyes, a carefully planned thrust at my spinsterhood.) "I s'pose I orter be easy on you, since you couldn't be expected to know a mother's feelings. Well, ma'am, I went up there to see me Rosella—I had a new dress I was a-carrying her—there wasn't goin' to be anybody at the Asylum had more than me Rosella. It had ruffles to it an' pink ribbons. An' when I got up there what did I find? I found she wasn't there, ma'am; an' when I asked the superintendent she said she was off in the country—she an' Robbie Daley—with some nice ladies. Now, ma'am, I ain't sayin' you ain't nice (her tone sank upon a note of infinite condescension), but that ain't it. I won't have me Rosella—her that's the youngest of six—so far away from me. Mis' Barnard, she talked a whole string, but I told her 'twasn't a mite of use—she didn't know the feelings of a mother. So she give me this note for you, an' if you please, ma'am, I'd like me Rosella right away."

I took the note which she extended—somewhat the worse for its conveyance from the superintendent's hand to mine. It was brief and characteristic, but it offered one faint gleam of hope.

"MY DEAR MISS GOLDWIN: It is enough to make one wish sometimes that one's memory was an utter blank upon the subject of the fourth commandment. Oh, not often, of course—reason reasserts itself. And we see enough pitiful things here, Heaven knows; it would seem as if one ought to welcome comedies. But there are some like the bearer of this

note (who cannot read writing; I only wish that she could) who seem utterly selfish in regard to their children. I've told her how much better it is for poor little Rosella to be out in the country this hot weather, but my arguments were so much wasted breath. And so, since some irony of fate has made her the child's mother, I suppose that she must have her way. I know of no law to invoke upon our side. But possibly you can prevail with the boy's mother. She's a lymphatic sort of a creature who would scarcely be moved to emotion if her boy were carried to Kamtchatka! Mrs. Hoolan has simply dragged her along for effect. At least I think so. Good-luck to your efforts with her!

"CAROLINE BARNARD."

I looked at Mrs. Hoolan.

"Do you know what Miss Barnard says here? She thinks that it is much better for Rosella with us. There are so many at the Asylum, they tease and frighten her. You know how grave and still she was there, and here she is laughing and singing all day long."

Mrs. Hoolan smiled; it was such an intensely exasperating smile that it was all I could do to keep my hands off her.

"Yes, ma'am, I make no doubt you mean well, ma'am, but the feelings of a mother is such that when she makes her child a dress and goes to see her, she wants to see her, ma'am."

I longed to reply that I should have thought the feelings of a mother would be such as to want her child to be where she would be strongest and happiest, but for Rosella's poor little sake I tried once more.

"If you only were willing to let her stay through the hot weather," I began. Then I saw that it was useless. A bright red spot leaped into the woman's thin cheeks and an ominous dignity fell upon her manner.

"I'll thank you to give me me child, ma'am," she observed frigidly.

"Certainly,—you are her mother,—I cannot keep her against your insistence. But you will let the boy stay, will you not?" I pleaded, turning to the other woman.

She smiled—an irresistible smile it was. I knew then what was the haunting familiarity that had puzzled me when I first saw her. She hesitated irresolutely, but Mrs. Hoolan gave her a monitory dig in the side, and she was obedient.

"I reckon not," she said gently.

"But when you see how well and happy he is? I'll call him in and you can see. Perhaps you could stay and take lunch with him, couldn't you?"

She looked pleadingly at Mrs. Hoolan, but that lady held her with a piercing glance.

"I reckon not," she repeated helplessly.

There was nothing more to do—the case was lost, and, angry and

heart-sick, I went in search of the children. I found them out in the vegetable garden with Ethelwyn crying over them.

"I was coming downstairs and I heard," she explained, absently wiping her eyes with Eugenia. "I think it's just *wicked!* I think there ought to be a law against such mothers. *She* doesn't care. You needn't try to be moral and all that—you know yourself that she doesn't. She just wants to have her own way, that's all. You needn't make big eyes at me either—I don't care who hears; and when Rosella has learned how to laugh too—and Tomato—and Euge——"

She trailed off into incoherences; then two calico-clad figures appeared, advancing down the walk. Ethelwyn underwent instant petrification. I was afraid that she might say something to be vehemently repented later, but she said nothing—she took her fill in glaring.

It was curious to watch the children. Boy, as soon as he recognized his mother, ran forward with pretty delight, but Rosella stood like a little statue, her brows drawing together in the old unhappy way, and her old silence falling upon her; it was as if she had stepped suddenly from the freedom of sun and wind into close prison walls.

Mrs. Hoolan stooped and kissed her effusively, murmuring endearments which changed in tone as the child continued unresponsive. Ethelwyn turned sharply away.

"I'll get their things," she said in a muffled voice. "I think Mrs. Bassett is coming."

Mrs. Bassett was coming—through the hedge. So was Minerva from the kitchen, her hands full of roosters, and Peter from the stables, his fumbling fingers trying to twist horsehair rings. Even old Dilly hobbled out from the back porch. The children stood perplexed and half frightened by the commotion. Boy's mother looked about the circle apologetically, but Mrs. Hoolan stood erect and triumphant. She even had the supreme audacity to wish that the young lady would hurry up with Rosella's clothes, as they had a long walk before them and 'twas getting on in the day. When Ethelwyn came back with the bundles and thrust them wordlessly into the other mother's arms Mrs. Hoolan merely sniffed. And truly she could well afford disdain.

Five minutes later we stood at the gate looking down the road after the little procession. Boy kept turning and waving his hand to us, but Rosella trudged on without a backward glance. Suddenly there was a scramble and a dash, and a streak of yellow flashed by us and darted down the road—the ever-faithful Tomato. Ethelwyn went in pursuit. The chase was a long one, but she came back at length with the kitten struggling in her arms.

"I suppose," she said hysterically, "Tomato's mother will appear and claim her offspring next. It only needs that to make the tragedy complete!"



August 27.

Such a desolate two weeks as it was after the children went! It didn't seem as if we could ever get used to the silence, and mealtimes were so forlorn that we practically boarded with Mrs. Bassett. But lately things have been happening—not to me, of course, nor yet, what is remarkable, considering the nature of events, to Ethelwyn. They are chiefly concerned with our handmaid in the kitchen.

The first intimation we had of the exciting course of events was a scrap of paper I picked up on the dining-room floor. I supposed it one of Ethelwyn's nature notes, which blow about the house like autumn leaves, and unfolded it idly. The words that met my startled eyes were these, "For your rosy cheeks and curly hair I always did admire." I carried the paper to Ethelwyn at once.

"Do you think," I said sternly, "that it is fair to him to leave such things where anybody can read them?"

"What him?" asked Ethelwyn.

"I don't know, I'm sure, I haven't been enlightened. Possibly this will recall it to your memory."

Ethelwyn read the bit of paper with a bewildered face.

"But this isn't mine," she said. "People don't admire—I mean—well, when people talk about my hair they generally say red, not curly."

"But you are the only one who has rosy cheeks."

Ethelwyn gazed at me pityingly.

"It is evident," she said, "that you are not acquainted with works of the imagination. This, my dear, is plainly intended for Minerva."

I scorned the idea. "It can't be, Ethelwyn. Why, she's as black as midnight; the reddest rose that ever bloomed couldn't prevail against such undiluted ebony as hers."

"It's easily proved," Ethelwyn replied. "We can ask her, you know."

So we carried the paper to the kitchen; to my amazement, Ethelwyn was right. Minerva welcomed it effusively. Incidentally she furnished an explanation of what followed later.

"I done thought I seed the end of that," she said, tossing her head.

"But, Minerva, is he a nice young man?" Ethelwyn questioned gravely.

"Deed, Miss, I dunno. I ain't troubling myself none 'bout him en his sassy letters. I guess if I ain't fin' a better-lookin' nigger than him I'll trabble alone all my days."

"There's somebody else then," Ethelwyn cried, with the never-failing interest of the feminine in all matters of the heart.

Minerva turned and stared in honest amazement.

"Land o' Goshen, honey!" she exclaimed, "deyse allus niggers

taggin' 'round. I'se been mar'ied three times already, an' I dunno how many more's befo' me no mo'n you do. You see, I ain' exactly harnsome, but I was allus sort o' takin'."

Incomprehensible as it would seem to a casual observer, we proved this statement true. How long it had been going on I've no idea—I suppose we had both been too much occupied with piazza callers to notice the guests entertained at the rear of the house, but now that our attention was called to the matter, we found that there was rarely an evening when some dusky admirer did not visit the kitchen. They were of all shades and ages, from old Uncle Eph, stubbing along with the help of a bulging green umbrella, his shining, monkey-like face knotted into a thousand wrinkles, to gay and jaunty "yaller boys" redolent of cologne, and visible far through the dusk by the brilliance of their attire.

So, really, after such an illuminating discovery yesterday's incident might almost have been expected, only somehow it found us unprepared. It was the last night of the house-party. It was so still and empty after the children went that we had to do something, and neither of us had the courage to adopt a second family and brave another such experience. I offered to go away somewhere with Ethelwyn till the heats were over, but she wouldn't hear of such a thing; I'm afraid she remembered some of my views upon the subject of leaving home. So, finally, we compromised upon the house-party—an August house-party in Washington would savor of novelty at least. But up here on the hill there is always a breeze, and we had all the world to wander in, and we kept out of each other's way till the worst of the heat was over each day, and staid up till all hours of the night and morning, when things were sweet and cool and dewy, and we really surprised ourselves by the success of it.

The party lasted a week, and was to wind up with an imposing feast, of which each member suggested one course. The result was somewhat conglomerate, but apparently pleasing to the inner man. It was between the second and third courses that the pause occurred. It was a long one and continued to lengthen—it lasted fully fifteen minutes by the clock; I hope our guests didn't know as accurately as Ethelwyn and I did. We compared notes afterwards and both declared that it was the longest fifteen minutes that we ever lived through. Then Minerva appeared with—I believe it was blackberry shortcake, and the meal flowed peaceably to its close.

The next morning I went into the kitchen for an explanation; it came with compliant readiness.

"'Deed, Miss Persis, I was right sorry to keep you all waitin', an' dat's a fact, but the ash gentleman was axin' me to marry him, an' I was 'bleeged to stop an' tell him why I couldn't."

There must have been some fatal spirit abroad in the air that night, for but a few minutes later Ethelwyn came to me.

"You knew that—Mr. Smith," she began, running her finger absently around the tray where I was washing the breakfast silver.

"I believe that I do," I responded.

Ethelwyn picked up one of the forks and examined the pattern with extreme interest.

"I'm afraid—he won't—be coming here any more," she said with difficulty.

"Oh Ethelwyn," I cried, "how could you!"

She turned at that, her face flushed and her eyes full of tears.

"I couldn't help it, could I?" she protested. "And I liked him so much, and I'd talked and talked to him about that pretty Miss Pollard, and told him how lovely she was and all, and—Cousin Persis, what makes people go and spoil things so?"

I don't understand it. The child was really hurt over something. I'm afraid we haven't yet seen the last of Mr. Smith. I shouldn't put it that way—he's a thoroughly nice fellow—I asked Roger about him. If only he had a name!

OCTOBER 18.

Oh, the wonder of the golden world! We had thought autumn never was coming. Day after day we woke to green hills and summer winds, and the trees, the middle of October, still held their black-green shadows. Then suddenly, all in a breath, it changed. The trees on our sunset hill stood out entrancingly like great bubbles of color. The tulip down in the hollow flamed like a golden torch, and the beeches—there is no word to tell the magic of the beeches. The "How to Know" books grow dusty on the shelves while day after day we walk or sit still and wonder.

We do such happy, idle, foolish things. We spend hours gathering chestnuts—though neither of us eats them, even with the inducement of an open fire by which to roast them. But how else can we get such a delicious sense of sunlight, and the beauty of the copper-colored ground, and the joy of rustling through dead leaves, and the thrill of rapture when you find a specially fat prize, and all the thousand indescribable scents and sounds and memories that make an autumn day? So every night the pile of shining brown treasures in the garret grows larger. Of course, we're not going to waste them. Some day—the plan is Ethelwyn's—we are going to hire a push-cart and get Peter to take the load down to some of the city alleys and scatter autumn's largess. I suggested to Ethelwyn that she needn't think that she could do such a simple thing as give away a few bushels of nuts without changing the world thereby. Who knows how many nickels she would divert from worthy and voluble Italians, who likewise have *their* pushcarts laden

with chestnuts for which they expect recompense at the rate of five cents a quart? Is it charity to feed little darkies by taking the chestnuts—metaphorically speaking—from little Italians' mouths? But Ethelwyn says that she is going to particularly direct Peter not to go where there is any chestnut-dealer; or if he should chance to, and the dealer seem annoyed thereby, he is to buy some more nuts from the aggrieved vender to add to his original stock. I'm afraid that Ethelwyn would never shine as a student of political economy.

But nuts are not our only treasure. The library looks like a veritable corner of the forest; we bring in gorgeous branches of ruby and gold, and bank them over the mantel-piece and the windows and the bookcase. There are sheaves of asters too, like purple twilights, and white Michaelmas daisies,—All Angels, by the pretty English name,—and scrawny branches of witch-hazel. That is not in bloom yet, but we like to get the seeds and hear them explode. Some evenings there will be quite a volley of fairy musketry about us. And since it is our whim just now to have nothing disturbed, the flowers change to white, fluffy ghosts that go wandering about the room, and the dead leaves fall and blow about in little eddies and drift into heaps in the corners, and we sit in the midst of it and dream of the golden days.

But we are not idle these evenings—far from it; in fact, in our eight months in Arden we never have been busier. It isn't enough to load our arms with trophies—our skirts come loaded too. Never before did I realize how many of her children Nature propagated by means of certain persistent qualities. Tiny fingers clutch at us from every wayside, and seldom miss their mark—burrs, pitchforks, beggars' lice, and a hundred others of, no doubt, equally pleasant names and attributes. At first we paid no attention. "Why shouldn't the poor little weeds have a good time as well as we?" Ethelwyn demanded. But when the poor little weeds began to fringe the bottoms of our skirts so that every step drew them across our ankles, and when they began to climb up our stockings, and gather in great clods upon our underskirts, we changed our minds. At first we merely surreptitiously dropped behind bushes (for some especially brilliant leaves!) and clutched madly at the offending mites, a moment later joining each other flushed and guilty, with a few dull or ragged leaves which somehow showed no trace of the magic glamour which had lured us; then we grew bolder, and when we found our skirts pinned together with burrs, we openly and severely wrenched the tenacious green things out.

But the climax came one night in the library, when Ethelwyn, who had been lying on the couch, arose suddenly and appeared before my astonished vision with the couch cover sticking to her back like a plaster that hadn't been trimmed off to fit her.

"There are in the human world," Ethelwyn observed after one

glance over her shoulder to see what was pulling, "people who abuse your kindness. I've discovered that Nature herself at times shows the same weakness. If you'll pick me off, Cousin Persis, I'll pick you."

There has been in all this wonderful month just one drawback. There was a serpent in Eden. In Arden there are—spiders. There are days when the whole world shimmers silver with the tiny lines floating from every fence and bush—strange symbols of the *wander-lust* that reaches so far down creation. I never see one of the out-reaching threads without wondering how far the little traveller goes on such frail crafts. Yet though we brush aside the threads everywhere, though many a time we find them flying from our skirts or hair or even our noses, we've never yet found a spider on one, and they do not trouble us. It is the spiders that wander without webs that vex our peace. Spiders are the one thing that Ethelwyn cannot endure. A snake she views with equanimity, and a mouse is a matter of utter indifference to her, but a spider sends all the color from her face. I'll never forget the first one we saw this fall. We had gone for purple asters, but the hillside was so warm and sunny and still that we sat and sat there, doing nothing, saying nothing, but supremely content. Suddenly Ethelwyn sprang up with a scream, shivering from head to foot.

"Oh, look!" she gasped.

For a moment I could see nothing, the creature was so exactly the color of the twigs and stones over which he was crawling; had he been still I never could have discovered him in the world. It was a large, brownish-gray spider, fully two and a half inches in spread. I rose and shook my skirts.

"Let's go home," I said, "and sit—and sit—on the table!"

"I'll never dare sit on the ground again!" Ethelwyn wailed, "and it was so sweet and still and lovely."

"Don't you suppose you could if we scraped the ground about us carefully?"

"Do you suppose so?" she asked doubtfully.

"And we would face different ways, so that each could watch the other."

"We might try it so once," she admitted.

So that is the way we do, when we feel inclined to rest; if we can, we find a rock, upon which, for some inscrutable reason, we feel safer, although, as Ethelwyn observes, we may be sitting over whole families of the Things (she never speaks the word if she can help it); if not, we go carefully and painstakingly over a large area of ground—say a circle with a diameter of seven feet; if within this space we find a Thing, we leave it at once; if we do not, we seat ourselves carefully in the exact centre, facing each other, and tuck our skirts tightly about us, that no Things, if they should by any possibility elude our vigi-



lance, could crawl up underneath. So we sit. It takes away somewhat from our old freedom, it is true. Perhaps that is the reason that we've taken to walking more and sitting less, though Ethelwyn says it's because it is getting colder. Even then our trials are not wholly ended. As the nights grow sharper, big black spiders lurk in the corners of the steps and doorways and take every opportunity to get into the house. Ethelwyn poured one from her stocking one morning, since which event she always has Minerva come in and make a preliminary examination before she will dress. At another time, glancing carelessly at one of her window-screens, she saw a hairy black leg thrust around it, then another and another, followed—with some difficulty, owing to the narrowness of the passage—by a fat, black body. She was so petrified with horror that she forgot to call for several minutes, and then it took the four of us—Minerva, Peter, Ethelwyn, and I—half an hour to hunt it down. The hunting was chiefly done by Peter—though not from any lack of willingness on Minerva's part be it said in justice to her heroism. I think she rather enjoys finding a Thing and carrying it from the room by one leg, its seven other legs writhing and squirming about her thumb and finger. It seems cruel to condemn even Things to a fiery death, so she has orders to carry them down to the brook and throw them in where the current is swift—she must be very particular upon that point. Even then Ethelwyn has qualms of conscience.

"They'll be sure to catch on a leaf or twig or something, don't you think so, Cousin Persis? Or if they don't, they can swim, can't they?"

But I am profoundly ignorant of the whole subject. I have my own conscience to face—I can't be responsible for Ethelwyn's.

But, in spite of all our happy outland hours, I am worried about Ethelwyn. She is restless and distraught, and comes downstairs in the morning with pale cheeks and shadows under her eyes. She declares that there is nothing the matter, but I told her seriously yesterday that if she didn't seem more like herself soon, I should send for Cousin Tom. She called me an "absurd old dear," but she didn't object, and that in itself was alarming. I can't bear to think how I should miss her if Cousin Tom carried her off; yet I couldn't take the responsibility of her possible illness. I have suspected for a long time that Mr. Smith was concerned in the matter (I met the poor boy down-town yesterday, and he looked so grave that my heart ached for him), and I grow daily more certain of it. A week or two ago Ethelwyn was seized with a sudden desire to go to Mount Vernon again. I had sprained my foot a little in one of our walks and could not go, but Mrs. Bassett readily agreed to take my place. Somehow, though she was so sweet and sympathetic, I fancied Ethelwyn was a little relieved at the change of chaperone. When that evening she walked into the library where

Roger and I were lazing, her cheeks were brilliant and the old laughter was in her voice.

"See what I've got!" she triumphed, thrusting a white rose in my face.

"Ethelwyn Dill, I believe you went for that!"

"The last one on the bush!" she declared—"the very last! Wasn't the gardener a dear to give it to me? I told him I didn't think I ought to take it, but he seemed to think that I needed it particularly. He said the charm couldn't fail with the last rose on the bush; I would only have to show it—I needn't even say a single word."

Roger rose suddenly and went out to the kitchen. I believe he said something about wanting to speak to Peter.

Ethelwyn's eyes sought mine in perplexity.

"I hope I didn't drive him away," she said. "He went as if he were—oh, fired out of a mortar!"

She laughed as she said it, but I knew that she was touched. Ethelwyn is not accustomed to having people vanish from her presence as if fired from mortars.

"Oh, you needn't mind that," I answered cheerfully. "It's just one of his whims to dislike superstitions. I shouldn't encourage him in it if I were you—I don't."

"I suppose," she remarked in a small, snubbed voice, "he thinks I'm dreadfully silly. But I don't care," gathering spirit, "*I* think superstitions are lovely—some of them, that is. It's only stupid scientific people that are too busy knowing things to have the least idea how much nicer it is just to enjoy them that can't see the beauty of superstitions. I'd like to tell him so."

"Why don't you?" I suggested.

"I think I will," she replied with determination.

And at dinner she did, but I don't think she was satisfied with the result. So far from being impressed, Roger was greatly amused at the attack, and the most well-balanced souls have been known to utter protest when a noble and righteous indignation has called forth nothing larger than amusement.

I hoped that the change might be lasting, but the next morning Ethelwyn's strange silent mood had fallen upon her again, and it has been with her ever since; not, of course, when she is with others,—then she is her merry, whimsical, affectionate self,—but when she thinks no one is noticing. I wish that I knew what to do for the child. The only thing I know is to coax her out to the hills for the healing of the day; it is a day that loves one and holds one close; it seems as if it must comfort her.

LATER.

The day had such a disastrous ending! Ethelwyn was more easily persuaded than I had dared to hope, and out in the wonderful golden

air she lost for a little while her strange, sad silences, and caught back her merry ways once more. We wandered on and on, gathering the last autumn harvests—oak- and sumach-leaves and white Michaelmas daisies with their heavy honey sweetness, and bees, dazed and stupid with the cold, crawling clumsily through them. We broke the branches carefully, so as not to disturb the bees; they never sting, and we liked their low humming and had a fancy to carry singing blossoms to our very door. When we reached home we sat down on the steps and shook them out, sending fluttering with them a shower of scarlet sumach-leaves that drifted through the still air and glowed like sparks on the path.

Ethelwyn, idly rearranging her great armful, suddenly plunged her face into the fragrant heap.

"There's something so sweet in there," she said. "I suppose it is just the daisies, but I thought for a moment it was something different." She sat idly thridding her fingers through the heap of scarlet and cinnamon. Presently, absently at first, but with growing wonder, she began to rub the end of her nose. I, who had fallen to dreaming, did not notice till she roused me.

"Cousin Persis," she said in a curious voice, "is there anything on my nose? It *feels* as if it were growing like a magician's tree! A moment ago the end of it felt like a cherry—then it grew as big as a plum—now it's an apple! If it keeps on, it will be a—a pumpkin, and my face will be all hidden behind it. Cousin Persis, am I dreaming, or what is happening to me?"

I stared at her in dismay. On the end of her small nose there was, unquestionably, a decided swelling.

"Ethelwyn," I cried, "drop your leaves and let me look at them. Child, child, why *didn't* you read your 'How to Know' for this at least! Don't you see that you have a branch of poison sumach there?"

"Those very brightest and loveliest of all!" Ethelwyn groaned. "And I must have put my face right down in it. Oh Cousin Persis, isn't there *anything*—vaseline—witch-hazel—Jamaica-ginger? I'd even take cod-liver oil. You don't suppose it will shut my eyes all up, do you?"

She was running into the house, and I followed. By the time my slower feet could overtake her she had flown to the medicine-closet and smeared her nose with vaseline. I gave one look, and then stood petrified. Under the yellow grease that blister showed as large as a pea and black as ink.

Ethelwyn flashed about and ran to the mirror. When she came back to me she was quite serene.

"I always knew that I could rise to a great occasion," she said, smiling at me with such peculiar effect that I could only gaze in hor-

rible fascination,—“that a real calamity would find me full of calmness and courage. And what could be a greater calamity than to go through life with an African tip to an Anglo-Saxon nose? Besides, my hands feel funny. Do you suppose they are going to turn African too?” She stretched out her hands and viewed them critically. Angry red spots and patches had sprung up all over them.

“Perhaps I might just as well leave them unvaselined?” she hazarded.

“I think you’d better,” I replied. “We’ll have a doctor prescribe the next formula—I’m going for one now. Tell Peter to clear off the leaves, Ethelwyn, but to throw them away—not burn them. A poisoned Ethelwyn is enough—I don’t want a poisoned Peter.”

“I should think you would,” Ethelwyn said whimsically, “it’s so beautifully alliterative—‘Peter picked a piece of poisoned sumach.’ I don’t *want* any doctor, Cousin Persis!”

“For once,” I returned firmly, “your wishes don’t move me in the least. I shall bring a doctor home with me.” I was hurrying about gathering up my gloves and purse.

Ethelwyn’s voice pursued me. “I hope he’s an *old* doctor,” she said. “I won’t see any other—not this way!”

“Ethelwyn,” I cried, “I believe you are incorrigible.”

“Yes’m,” she returned meekly, “I suppose so. But it’s so much nicer than being monotonous, you know!”

If I hadn’t been so anxious, I should have punished her by bringing back Dr. Agnes Wintergreen, but I know it’s foolish of me—I never yet could bring myself to have confidence in a woman physician. So I went for our old family doctor, and I described in such vivid, if unscientific, terms the state of Ethelwyn’s nose, and my fears for the effects of poisoning upon her present run-down condition, that I had him up here ten minutes after I reached home. He laughed at me then and told me that it would all disappear in a few days. But I didn’t mind being laughed at in my relief; besides, he acknowledged that it was a bad thing to let the poison get in one’s system.

So now Ethelwyn goes about with a bandage across her nose and more bandages on her hands, and smelling like a whole pharmacopeia; she seems to find herself unusually interesting, and is disposed to treat the matter as a remarkably happy joke. If poisoning often has this effect, I shall unhesitatingly recommend it to all sufferers from melancholia.

#### NIGHT.

I am sitting here stunned! That I should have been so stupid! I am a disgrace to my sex! I can’t write connectedly, my very pen goes off in little jumps and spurts; as for ideas, they are hopping like—fleas!

Ethelwyn and I had settled down for a long, quiet evening in the library. Peter had lighted the fire, and the room was in one of its most winning moods. Under the dancing lights it seemed as if the very books were pushing gently forward to join the circle. We were pretending to read, but Ethelwyn had not turned a page for twenty minutes, and I was openly and shamelessly fire-dreaming, when the bell gave a tremendous peal. We both started, and Ethelwyn dashed for the stairs. She stood there a second, unconsciously grasping her bandaged nose with one bandaged hand and sent a shrill and peremptory whisper across the hall.

"If it's any caller," she commanded with a reckless defiance of grammar, "tell them I'm sick and just can't see them. Make him understand" (even then the pronoun, which was distinctly Ethelwyn's, amused me) "that I—I've had the doctor to-day and I *can't*! Don't let yourself be persuaded, Cousin Persis. You know you are easy to get around, and——"

But here Minerva, ploughing into sight from the end of the hall, broke short the pleasing and veracious description of my failings, and Ethelwyn vanished like a white moth in the upper shadows.

And, after all, it was only Roger. I was in half a mind to disobey her and call her down, but I remembered just in time that Roger was a man, and that no man save the doctor, no matter if he were as little to be considered as the "ash-gentleman," would be permitted to gaze upon Ethelwyn's nose in its present dusky estate.

Roger dropped into a chair, but there was an unusual restlessness upon him; had he been a woman, I should have said that he was nervous, so alive was he to every sound. Somehow too our old, easy talk was beyond reach to-night. I gave it up at last and went back to the fire as more companionable, and left him to his own devices. He was wandering about the room fingering trifles, for which usually he professes a masculine aversion, or stopping and staring at the books; his voice came to me from a dark corner behind my back.

"Where's Ethelwyn to-night?"

"She's upstairs. She ran when she heard you coming, and I am upon no account to call her down. I shall be visited with all the penalties if I do. You wouldn't make me suffer, would you?"

He came around in front of me and looked down at me in something like his old fashion—at least, I supposed that it was. I was punishing his bearishness and wouldn't look up; but when I heard his voice I looked quickly enough.

"She isn't—sick—I hope?" he asked.

I couldn't answer. I only stared and *stared*! He half laughed, and then pulled a chair over beside me.

"I am glad you know, Persis," he said; "I never dreamed that you



didn't before—I felt as if the whole world must see. But I was sure one of the other fellows was ahead, I was so much older and graver. I couldn't believe I stood any chance. And I held off too, because I knew how she loved you, and since I was your cousin, I was afraid that she might not feel quite free. So I kept away when I could, and when I couldn't—oh, I've been a bear a thousand times! What can she have thought of me!" He got up and paced the floor restlessly. "Anyway, I've got to settle it to-night," he finished.

I put out my hand to him. "Not to-night, dear boy—you can't. It isn't anything serious,—don't be worried,—only Ethelwyn got poisoned yesterday with some sumach, and the poison settled in her nose. The doctor says that it will go in a few days, but if I let you see her now she'd never forgive me. Besides, I couldn't—I couldn't get her downstairs. It isn't a bit romantic, but the barrier is as impassable as the Arctic Sea."

He stared at me as if I were delivering an oration in ancient Syria.

"She won't come down just because her nose is swollen?" he cried. "Nonsense! I mean,—I beg your pardon, Persis,—only I've *got* to see her! Don't you understand that I've waited all summer? May I go to the stairs a minute?"

I nodded helplessly. He took the distance at three strides and looked up into the darkness.

"Ethelwyn!" he called.

A silence as of the grave was his only answer.

He called again with an emphasis that to an uninitiated observer would have seemed to savor of impatience rather than love.

"*Ethelwyn!*"

To this a small, far voice answered faintly, but not encouragingly,—  
"I hear you—I'm not coming down."

"You must!" he replied firmly. "I've got to see you. Do you hear, Ethelwyn? I've *got* to!"

The voice sounded nearer, and a bit of uncertain laughter floated downstairs; he frowned—a man never will understand a woman's laughter.

Ethelwyn's voice seemed, however, to have gathered spirit.

"I don't see how you're going to manage it. I've said I'm not coming down, and I'm not."

"You won't?"

"*No!*" The voice this time was like the stamp of a small and emphatic foot.

The man gathered himself together. One could feel sparks flying.

"Of course, I can't make you, Ethelwyn; but if you won't come, I shall say what I want to right here. I think the doors are ajar through to the kitchen and Minerva has company. I shall say it loud enough

so that you can't help hearing. If others hear, I can't help that. Will you come down?"

"I—can't—I—oh, you don't know—my nose is awful."

"Child, I don't care about your nose. It can be as big as an onion if it wants to. It would only be so much more of you to——"

I coughed warningly. Really, I had some rights in my own house, or supposed that I had. From upstairs came a distressed protest,—

"Oh, *don't!*"

"Will you come down, then?"

"Wa—wait a minute." There was no mistaking the tears in the voice now.

I walked over to him and shook his arm. "You shall not torment her," I said indignantly. "You come away and let her alone."

But he felt me no more than if I had been a grass-seed. In fact, I was shaking only his body—his soul was upstairs.

There was a movement up in the shadows.

"If—if I come down, will you promise to shut your eyes and not look at me?"

The expression that came over his face made me sink down on the stairs helpless with laughter.

"Heavens, Ethelwyn!" he cried, "what do you suppose I'm made of?"

"Well, then——"

His voice was ominous. "I'll give you three minutes more."

I could hear the stir of Ethelwyn's dress. The old clock counted off the seconds with brutal indifference, 60—80—90—100—120——.

Roger had his mouth open to speak, when he was silenced by an April voice from above.

"You can stand on the piazza and I'll go to the library window, and that's *all* I'll do. If you try to talk to me here, I'll run into the closet and stuff my ears, and if I do that I couldn't hear a fire-alarm—so now!"

Without a word Roger turned and flung open the front door. A breath of warm autumn air, pungent with the smell of burning brush, drifted in and was cut in two by the slam of the door.

There was a rustle above me and I stepped meekly aside. A small figure with scarlet cheeks and radiant eyes and dusky nose swept by me and into the library. I am very certain that I heard the window open.

That was an hour ago, and Ethelwyn has not yet come up. I suppose she finds it endurable because her back is to the light. The window-seat is very wide, and even if Roger should be standing out on the piazza hatless all this time the air is as warm as September. I really see no cause for anxiety.

Bless the child, how happy I am over it! Only, somehow, through the happiness, I have a queer little feeling as if I were too old to be lying about and ought to be retiring to some friendly corner shelter somewhere: bound in half calf, perhaps, and slipped into one of my own shelves; Elia could make a place for me—a warm, friendly, comfortable place. I shall never be old to Elia.

LATER YET.

Ethelwyn has just left me. She slipped into the room a little while ago and came up behind me and put her arms around me in her most irresistible fashion.

"You won't send me home just yet, will you?" she said coaxingly. "Not if I promise to be ever and ever so much better? I—I'm sure that I'm going to be. You don't know how well I feel!"

"I inferred that you had taken a sudden change for the better," I answered.

Ethelwyn gave me a little shake and then crept around in front and cuddled down on the floor beside me with her chin on my knee. I lifted her face and tried to look down into it.

"Ethelwyn, child, are you *sure*?" I cried.

She gave me one fleeting glimpse of her radiant eyes, and then buried her face in my dress.

"I—I've been sure all summer," she confessed.

"All summer!" I echoed.

The twitching of my skirts evidenced an emphatic nod somewhere down in their folds.

"Yes, I was—from the very first minute; he was so strong and splendid, and—and—knew so much! And—and he *wouldn't* look at me! So then I tried to pretend that I didn't care, and—and—I guess maybe I flirted some to show that I didn't, and it didn't move him one bit, and by and by I couldn't pretend any longer, and—and—you'll think I'm dreadfully silly." The voice ran into a little gasp that might have been either tears or laughter.

"I'll try to stand it, Ethelwyn," I said.

She looked up, and the red was sweeping in floods across her face.

"You know that day I went to Mount Vernon? I—I was glad that you couldn't go, because I knew that you'd think it so silly, but I went—to get—one of those roses. Don't look at me, *please* look at—that whisk broom over on the side of the dressing-table! That's it—*please* stay so or I can't tell you, and I want to. Do you remember how I came home with it and you teased me, and—I—pretended to be mad because you did it before Roger? But I wasn't a bit—that was just what I wanted; and then, after all, it didn't move him any more than if it had been a piece of ice. You said you thought I'd have to go home if I didn't get better, and I felt like a hypocrite not to tell

you, and I couldn't. And—this is the very worst of it—I—I wrapped the rose in a little note he sent me once and I used to wear it—or, at least, I tore the address off the note because I was always dreadfully afraid I should lose it and somebody pick it up. And then to-day I did, and it was worrying me most to death. I dropped it outside the gate when we went across the road to watch the sunset. And he came a few minutes later for something, but saw we were at dinner and turned away, and then he saw the paper and recognized his own writing, and—and—I guess that's all, Cousin Persis."

The voice trailed into faintness, and I turned. The next moment the bright head was close to my face, and the child was sobbing out her happiness in my arms.

NOVEMBER 4.

We are walking through rainbows and golden mists and sunset pageants and whatever else in all this dear old world is full of light and magic. Sometimes, to be sure, it is too dazzling for my middle-aged eyes, and I go out to the hills for rest; they are wearing shadow colors now, in the twilight of the year. Yet yesterday—the third of November—I found eleven different varieties of flowers braving the cold, and the dandelions down in Mrs. Bassett's grass—though close-buttoned down to the ground—are yet shining undaunted. As for the city yards—chrysanthemums and roses and pansies have shown no sign yet of acknowledging bedtime. It is curious how nature herself seems to catch the stress of life in crowded ways, and keeps latest hours in the city. But out here, in spite of the courageous laggards, nature is growing sleepy. The summer birds have gone and the regular residents have fallen to silence—all except the English sparrows, who never heard of silence, and my little Carolina wren, whose clear, ringing call seems the very spirit of these sharp and stinging mornings. I caught Mrs. Bassett stalking him yesterday. He was somewhere on an old brush-heap, and she crept closer and closer, her eyes sparkling with delight. She gave it up at last and stood just listening, her cap over one ear and her little, wrinkled face all alight. When she heard my step she looked back, smiling.

"I knowed you'd be out, dearie," she said, "you was just bound to, with things calling so. Ain't it nice to be alive? I s'pose," she added quaintly, "'twill be full as nice to be dead when we come to that, only it seems as if 'twould take a while to get used to the golden streets and all after you've loved dirt roads so long. But I guess that will be fixed all right when we get to it."

She stood thoughtful a moment, smiling into the golden west, as if between her and it some high secret passed. Not even Ethelwyn's face, with the light of her "new heaven and earth" upon it, was ever more joyous. Oh, what a beautiful world it is, where such things can be!

# THE LOVE OF DENYS DE VAUDRENCŒUR

*By Beulah Marie Dix*

*Author of "Hugh Gwyeth," "Soldier Rigdale," "The Making of Christopher Ferringham," etc.*



ONE springtime, early in the eighteenth century, when the village of Glanby was a frontier town, the Sieur de Vaudrencœur came a-foraying down the Connecticut River. He had but a small party under his command, some thirty savages, Macquas and Abenakis, and one Frenchman, his half-brother, Denys de Vaudrencœur. Denys was almost seventeen, a man and of marriageable age according to Canadian standards, which were all the standards he had ever known. By New England standards he was no more than a pretty, slender boy.

At the Long Plains, ten miles above Glanby, the war party separated. The Sieur de Vaudrencœur, with the most of his Indians, struck eastward to attack the hamlet of Newfield, while Denys, with three Macquas, was left to guard the packs. Denys chafed a little at this disposition of the forces. He had undergone the hardships of the march from Canada, and now, on this, his first foray, he wanted a hand in the actual fighting. But the habit of obedience was strong in him. All his life he had submitted to the varying tyrannies of a dozen older brothers. Though he murmured at his leader's decision, he murmured under his breath, and in the end stayed meekly behind with his Macquas.

The Macquas speedily slipped off to do a little hunting of their own, and Denys grew lonesome. In the search for amusement, boy-like, he prowled about in the bushes till his prowling landed him in the beaten roadway that ran from Glanby to Newfield. It was just at that moment that two Glanby men, Elnathan Hoyt and Hezekiah Weeks, came riding peacefully up the road. Denys and the Glanby men spied each other at the same instant. In time of war there was but one form of greeting between the French and English of the border, and Denys's Indian dress betrayed his nationality. The three guns cracked almost simultaneously. Then the Glanby men, far too experienced fighters to be foolhardy, wheeled their horses and, in the



deadly fear of an ambushade, galloped for home. Denys lay in the roadway where he had fallen, with a musket-ball in his shoulder and another in his thigh.

There his Macquas found him when they crept up, drawn by the noise of the firing. They bandaged his hurts in hastiest fashion and started to carry him with them on their retreat. But the dread of pursuit grew upon them, and Denys, helpless and unconscious, retarded their flight. They abandoned him in a thick growth of pines, and weeks later gave the Sieur de Vaudrencœur a circumstantial account of how Denys had fallen in a hot skirmish and died in their arms.

Far from dying, Denys recovered consciousness, there among the pines. He called his Indians by name, begging for a draught of water, but he got no answer. Very slowly he realized that they had run away and left him to perish alone. A delicately nurtured youth would no doubt have resigned himself and perished, but Denys, for all his slender prettiness, came of hardy stock. To lie still and die was beyond him. He dragged himself along the ground till he came to a spring and, having drunk, he felt the strength to crawl on, though he scarcely knew why or whither. He did not dream of reaching Canada, crippled as he was, and he could not decide whether or no he wished to reach an English settlement. The treatment he had seen meted out to English captives in Canada was not such as to encourage him to yield himself a prisoner. The English might give him to their Indian allies to torture, might even torture him themselves. His half-brother, Armand, who was a priest, had told him many shocking things of the heretics.

Still, Denys staggered on, and his uncertain course was mainly southward. There were blank periods of unconsciousness in which he lay wherever he chanced to fall, and wild times of delirium in which the stars went dazzling down the sky above him and he sang as he walked. He chewed the young leaves that were bursting on the trees and he drank of the springs, and somehow he kept life in him till the fourth morning broke. Then he found himself in the meadows north of Glanby. A ploughed field stretched before him, and far away he saw the sunlight on the roofs of the village. All the old dread of the heretic foe came over him. He dropped down between two furrows of the field with his face to the sky, and he prayed to the Virgin that he might die quickly ere the Englishmen discovered him.

By an odd chance it was Elnathan Hoyt who found Denys. He came early to his field, with his gun on his shoulder and a wary eye about him for savages. So intent was he on the thicket at the edge of the field that he did not spy Denys till he almost stumbled over him.

Denys turned his head feebly where he lay in the soft dirt. "Je

me rends, M'sieu," he muttered, with appealing eyes, and lost consciousness.

A practical man and the father of eight sons, Hoyt picked up the French boy and carried him into Glanby. "As long as I shot him, I calculate I ought to take care of him," he explained to his interested neighbors.

So Denys was put to bed at Hoyt's house, and Hoyt and his family tended him as carefully as if he were of their own blood. Denys was very patient and submissive under all their ministrations, but his eyes watched everything that went on about him with the alert terror of a trapped wood-creature. He had small faith in heretics.

But among Hoyt's children was a daughter, Eunice, a tall, white-skinned, red-haired girl of one-and-twenty. She had the temper that went with her bright hair, as her brothers knew to their cost, but she had also the instinct of motherhood. To that instinct the captive French boy, with his shyness and his palpable terror, that he tried hard to master, appealed irresistibly. She soothed and petted him quite as if he were one of her younger brothers, and Denys, laying aside his suspicions of this one heretic, fell madly in love with her. It mattered nothing to him that he was not yet seventeen while Eunice was one-and-twenty. He considered her the only adorable woman in the world, and, as soon as he had learned from her a smattering of the English tongue, he told her so. As his knowledge of the language increased, he repeated his declaration with more and more fluency and fervor, but Eunice invariably told him not to be silly, in an elderly tone that chilled him. For there was a neighbor's son, Simeon Barnard, whom she loved and whom she was to marry.

Still, Denys would not give up hope. Somehow, spite of Simeon Barnard, he, he himself, would win and wed the adorable Eunice, yes, and stay there with her in Glanby the rest of his days. For, from a state of suspicious acquiescence in his captivity, Denys had come slowly to find contentment in the life of Glanby. Now that the haunting fear of a painful death was taken from him, he decided that, point for point, he received better treatment from Hoyt than he had received from his own overbearing brothers. And Hoyt's sons, though given to horse-play that Denys at the first could scarcely understand, were in the main friendly youths—and they were Eunice's brothers. After all, Glanby was as pleasant an abiding place as the rude Château de Vaudrencœur.

Moreover, Denys had good precedent in changing his allegiance. Again and again had his brother, the priest, told him, with proper horror, of French renegades who, taken captive, had renounced their religion and settled down among the New England heretics. Six months before Denys had shuddered to hear of such iniquity, but now

he found himself secretly applauding the wisdom of his renegade compatriots. No doubt they too had seen and loved some daughter of the Puritans. And where they had succeeded in their suits, might not another succeed?

By the time that autumn came Denys, in the cast homespuns of the young Hoyts that had replaced his Indian clothes, made one boy more at Elnathan Hoyt's harvesting. He was trying hard to win the good opinion of Hoyt, of all Glanby, and, indeed, the men of Glanby, never so suspicious of Denys as he had been of them, accorded him a somewhat contemptuous liking. Hezekiah Weeks, to be sure, said that all Frenchmen were treacherous Papists and Hoyt was a fool to trust such a glib-spoken young rascal as Denys, but Weeks with his grumbling represented only a small minority. Glanby at large tolerated Denys, and Hoyt treated him quite as if he were one of his own boys, and Eunice was rather more considerate of him than of her brothers, so Denys's hopes were high.

But while he made his pretty, boyish schemes, his captors, quite regardless of his plans, were sending messages about him from Glanby to Boston and from Boston to Quebec. The end did not come till the bare, leafless months of winter. Then one day Hoyt told Denys, in evident expectation that the boy would be pleased, that in a month's time he would be restored to his own people. It had been agreed that he should be exchanged for Ezra Sutcliffe, captured from Glanby two years before, and he was to be sent back to Canada at once.

"But I desire not to return," cried Denys, heart-broken. "You are all friends to me. It is my intention to remain with you forever."

His desire, he found, had very little to do with the progress of events. Hoyt was puzzled,—indeed, was rather sorry for the boy's unfeigned distress,—but Hoyt and all Glanby preferred to have Ezra Sutcliffe rather than Denys de Vaudrencœur. Like it or not, Denys had to pack up his few belongings and say farewell to Glanby.

On the morning of his departure he lingered to bid Eunice good-by. She was hemming linen sheets against her marriage, which was near at hand, but she laid by her work for a moment, and with her old maternal habit gave Denys good advice about keeping his throat well wrapped up. But there the misery in the boy's eyes touched her, and she kissed him good-by ere she hurried back to her wedding-sewing. As for Denys, being of Celtic temperament, he went away weeping openly and unashamed.

A month later, after a hard passage through the northern woods, Elnathan Hoyt, the chief of the expedition, delivered Denys over to the commandant at Chambly. From there Denys was sent down the river, and he reached his brother's château, as one risen from the dead, just a full year from the time he quitted it.

The Seigneur his brother did not receive him back with unmixed gratification. "Had you no better courage than to let yourself be taken alive by our enemies?" he complained. "Here we must yield up one of them to redeem you, miserable!"

The Sieur de Vaudrencœur, however, lithe leader of many forays, said consolingly that Denys, if he had kept his wits about him, must have learned enough of the defences of Glanby to compensate his countrymen for the loss of Ezra Sutcliffe.

But Denys's brother Armand, the priest, said sorrowfully that nothing could compensate for the possible loss of Denys's soul. He was grievously alarmed by Denys's new indifference in matters of the faith; indeed, he thought it well that Denys marry at once, marry a true believer who would hold him firmly bound to Mother Church.

The Seigneur was of the same opinion. The Canadian government in those days gave a bounty for large families, and it was high time that Denys set about winning the bounty. He was rising eighteen, and there was little Fanchette Kermadon——

"I do not fancy black-haired women," cried Denys, with sudden spirit.

A scene followed, so alarming that it was handed down in the traditions of the De Vaudrencœur family. The outcome of it was that Denys snatched up his gun and ran out of the house. He joined a party of voyageurs which was going up the river to the Lakes, and it was eight months before his brothers saw him again.

When Denys judged that the storm had blown over, he ventured back to the château. He was amazed at the kindness of his reception. The truth was that the Sieur de Vaudrencœur was going southward on a glorious expedition. He would have under his command three hundred Indians and half-bloods and a dozen Frenchmen, and he looked to inflict a heavy blow on the English frontier. Denys could help him. For it was at Glanby that he meant to strike, and Denys knew the Glanby country.

At first Denys refused flatly. His various brothers coaxed and threatened. The Seigneur denounced him as a traitor to the King, and Armand the priest lamented him as a soul lost to the Church; but all was useless. In the end it was the sentence with which the Sieur de Vaudrencœur gave up the struggle that decided Denys.

"As thou wilt, little one," the Sieur de Vaudrencœur had said. "Whether thou art with us or not, we shall burn Glanby."

Denys thought over that saying in the night watches. It was very true. He was not the only man in Canada who knew the country round Glanby. The village and his friends within it were doomed—unless they were warned. Next morning Denys sought his brother.

"I have thought again. I will go with you," he said.

All the long march through the wintry forests he thought of the final scene that was before him. At times his hope was high. Somehow, the good God aiding, he would slip before his comrades, he would steal into the settlement ahead of them. In Indian warfare discovery always means defeat. The Glanby men, once warned, would spring to arms, and the settlement would be saved. And it was he who would have saved it. There would be no question of sending him back to Canada again. He would stay in Glanby the rest of his life, and Eunice—even to himself he would not admit that she was doubtless Eunice Barnard now. He thought of her as he had known her, desirable, adorable, the woman whom he yet would win.

But as the march went on these high hopes died in him. The *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* sent forward Indian scouts whom Denys could not dream of passing. There were scores of men about him, and tried forayers too. Slowly Denys came to realize his helplessness, and then the full horror of the situation grew upon him. That he, of all men, should witness the destruction of the town, the massacre of his English friends! Night after night the scene painted itself upon his dreams. He saw Eunice—and he woke shuddering in the dark to remember how he had seen her.

On the last nights there was no sleep for him. Wide-eyed, white-faced, he stumbled along in the van of the column. All the boy's pretty plans of the beginning of the journey were at an end. It was a man now who weighed the chances coolly: if the settlement were warned at all, it must be at the price of his own life. And the price was worth the paying, for Eunice's sake.

As on that earlier foray, the invaders left their packs at the Long Plains. All day they lurked in the white woods, and at evenfall set forward across the snow towards Glanby. There was no moon to betray them, but, to their disadvantage, the night was very still.

"But the pigs of heretics sleep sound!" muttered the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur*.

Denys, struggling along at his brother's side, made no answer, but he grasped his gun firmly. It would take but a second to swing it to his shoulder when the time came.

The meadows to the north of Glanby lay white before them, and overhead the quiet stars shone on the white roofs of the village.

"There, on the west side, you can enter the town easiest," Denys whispered recklessly. "Let me go first."

With his brother and two of the Abenaki scouts he stole forward at the head of the long file. Already his fingers were on the trigger of his gun. Clearer and clearer the snowy line of the roofs of Glanby showed against the black sky. The column was midway of the meadows. The time had come. Denys caught the gun to his shoulder.



Out of the corner of his eye the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* saw, and swung up his hand with his pistol clubbed. Simultaneously with his movement came the flash of Denys's gun. The shot went rattling out through the dark.

Mad with disappointment, the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* swung the pistol about in his hand and fired squarely at Denys's breast. Denys dropped in the snow, but the shot that struck him down sent a second warning note through the night. Before *De Vaudrencœur* and his savages could cover the few rods that still lay between them and the village half the men of *Glanby* had risen and barricaded their houses.

Even as it was, cruel work was done that night in *Glanby*. Years afterwards men still spoke with hushed voices of the great December massacre. When morning came twelve houses were in ruins and twenty of the *Glanby* folk lay dead among them, while more than two score were being hurried away across the snows to Canada.

*Elnathan Hoyt*, with his sons, who made a garrison in themselves, had beaten off the savages from his house, and he joined the reinforcements from down the river who followed the invaders out into the meadows. There a sharp battle was fought with the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur's* rear-guard, but in prudence the Englishmen hesitated at following into the woods, and fell slowly back upon *Glanby*. In the white meadows men were lying; some were Englishmen, slain or wounded in the last fight, and some were Indians, for so hot had been the struggle that the savages had not been able to bear away their dead. The *Glanby* men halted to seek and rescue their wounded.

Then *Hezekiah Weeks* raised a sudden cry: "Hoyt! *Elnathan Hoyt*! Come you here! As I'm a Christian man, 'tis your Denys, the black-hearted devil! Did I not warn ye? 'Tis he has brought the savages down upon us."

Every man in the meadows ran to the spot, but *Elnathan Hoyt* was first. Denys lay on his back in the snow where he had fallen. He was conscious, for his eyes opened heavily at the sound of the rushing footsteps, but his hunting-shirt was stiff with blood and his face was gray. He was dying, but on that dreary morning the *Glanby* men could feel for him no more compassion than they would have felt for a scotched snake.

"He's trying to say something," *Ezra Sutcliffe* spoke coldly. "Reckon he knows you, Hoyt."

Hoyt, with his face lined and seamed, hesitated a moment, then he knelt down in the snow by Denys, but he did not touch him.

Denys caught his breath with piteous choking. "Eunice," he whispered, and whispered the word twice ere Hoyt understood. "Is she—safe?"

Hoyt laid the words upon him as if they were so many blows: "She is dead, slain in her house, slain by your savages, and her baby with her. You can thank your Popish saints for the good work you've done."

He rose to his feet. "We've our men to look to," he said. "Ay, and our dead to bury." He walked away, and the other men followed him.

Only Asaph Hoyt, a boy of Denys's own years, who in the old times had shared his bed with Denys, lingered a moment, and whipping his water-bottle from under his coat laid it shamefacedly with reach of Denys's hand.

But when the men came back that way an hour later, the water was untouched and Denys de Vaudrencœur lay dead.



## TRAIL SONG

BY FRANK FARRINGTON

**H**ERE'S out on the open trail, my lass,  
With a heart for rain or shine!  
Here's out to race with wind in the face,  
To roam and rove at the wilding pace  
Where the weather thrills like wine!

We'll follow the wind of the way, my lass,  
Where it chases a truant stream.  
We'll loaf along with a vagrant song,  
With the glow of life all thrilling strong  
And the future a vibrant dream.

For what's a day or a year, my lass,  
But time for finding joy?  
We've naught to do, we crony two,  
With the Ship of Worry's crafty crew,  
We're free from all annoy.

Then here's a song, a song, my lass,  
A song for the open trail!  
We're off to seek the crimson streak  
That's sunk behind West Mountain's peak,  
And to drink from Freedom's grail.

# AT FIDDLER'S BRIDGE

*By Ella Middleton Tybout*



"**A**N' jes' at midnight at de full o' de moon yo' kin hyah de fiddle chunin' up, and ef yo' goes tuh de aidge o' de bridge an' draps a piece o' silvah intuh de watah (ten cents'll do), and sez 'Come fo'th, John Thompson,' sho's yo' bawn, chile, out he come an' plays. Dat's huccum de place tuh be called Fiddlah's Bridge."

Mrs. Bostwick held out her hand hospitably to replenish the cup of her guest, the Rev. Kinnard Brice, who shook his head doubtfully as he replied,—

"I sho'ly am 'stonished, Sistah Bos'wick, dat a lady o' yo' refinery should b'lieve in ghosesses."

Mrs. Bostwick bridled at the delicate flattery conveyed in this speech, but stuck to her point.

"It am a fac'," she repeated solemnly. "My boy Mose's yallah gal Jinny done hyah it wunst when she was comin' f'om de Big Quarterly, an' it skeert huh so bad she ain't been hyah sence. I suttenly hates tuh live so close, but dey ain't no help fuh it, so I jes' stays in de house at sech times ez I think ole John Thompson's roun'. Ain't yo' g'wine tuh have no mo' dis cawn pone, Bro' Brice? I done made it speshul fuh yo'."

"I'se b'liged tuh yo', Sistah, but I'se had 'nuff fuh de present. I'se been studyin' yo' wo'des, Sistah Bos'wick, an' I'se done come tuh de seclusion dat it's meh juty tuh p'int out tuh yo' fuh sho' dat dey ain't no sperrits down tuh de bridge. I'se g'wine tu stop hyah on meh way f'om Camp dis evenin', an' yo' an' me'll go down tuh de watah. Ef deys anythin' dah 'tain't g'wine tuh huht us,—me bein' sanctified anyhow and yo' havin' jes' 'sperienced 'ligion down tuh de Buck, an' ef he shows hieself I'll 'zort wid him an' lay him low."

Mrs. Bostwick accepted this handsome offer somewhat reluctantly. She was honestly afraid to go to the bridge after nightfall, but under the circumstances did not see her way clear to refuse, stipulating, however, that her husband should not be told of the proposed expedition, he having frequently ridiculed her fears of the old fiddler and announced that he would not object to sitting on the bridge all night if necessary.

She watched the long, lank figure of the preacher disappear over

the hill, then went into the house, where she encountered her husband, who was carefully depositing something on the table.

"Dannel Bos'wick," she demanded sternly, "whuh yo' git dat watahmillion? Yo' didn't hab no money. Don't yo' fotch no stolen millions intuh dis house. Does yo' hyah me talkin'? Whuh yo' git it?"

Receiving no reply to this inquiry, she approached the table and tapped the melon inquiringly with her thumb and finger.

"Hit's mighty ripe," she murmured; "seems like a pity tuh let it go tuh was'e. Don't yo' tell me yo' stole it, Dannel, caze I ain't g'wine tuh b'lieve no sech thing. Yo' ain't got 'ligion; yo' picks de banjo, an' yo' plays de 'cordeen, but yo' didn't steal no watah-million; I knows dat. Git de knife, honey, quick, an' let's begin."

"Rachel," ventured Daniel, when the feast was nearing completion and nothing but a large pile of rinds remained to tell the tale, "Rachel, was yo' washin' up tuh de big house tuh day?"

"Yaas," said Mrs. Bostwick, ejecting melon-seeds as she spoke, "I was."

"Whut yo' fotch home?"

"Dannel," said Mrs. Bostwick righteously, "I fotch nothin' home. Does yo' think I'se g'wine tuh take whut don't b'long tuh me jes' caze yo' likes tuh set an' stuff yo'seff? I'se 'feared Bro' Brice am right, Dannel, an' yo'se mighty onregin'rit."

Daniel sighed. Life was not so pleasant since Rachel had got religion some two weeks ago, and had, as it were, renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil. Formerly when she went to the big house to do the weekly washing, her ample proportions were covered by voluminous skirts containing many and deep pockets, one of which, indeed, was ingeniously lined with rubber cloth and could be trusted to carry milk and other liquids with perfect safety. No wonder Daniel thought regretfully of the evening meal as it used to be.

"Dannel," said Rachel, a little later, "whuh yo' g'wine?"

He reached for his accordion in provoking silence, whereat Rachel's wrath arose.

"Yo' ain't g'wine tuh pick no banjo, nuh play no 'cordeen in dis yere house," she announced. "Some o' dese days, Dannel, yo'se g'wine tuh see de wo'de 'Sin' in lettahs of fiah right 'crost dat 'cordeen. Den yo'se g'wine tuh be skeert tuh daith, an' yo' sperrit'll be ez oneasy ez ole John Thompson's."

"Laws, Rachel," said Daniel, "t'ain't no hahm tuh play de 'cordeen. Ever sence yo' went tuh de Buck yo'se jes' so biggoty deys no gittin' 'long wid yo' nohow. Yo' got no eyes fuh nobody but ole Kinnard Brice, an' he don't do nothin' but traipse roun' de kentry an' eat oddah folks' vittles. I ain't got no use fuh him nohow."

## At Fiddler's Bridge

"Hesh, Dannel," said Rachel. "Bro' Brice done been sanctified, an' he's a preachah o' de wo'de o' de Lawd. He 'lows he kin lay de sperrit o' ole John Thompson low, an' it takes a mighty holy puss on tuh do dat. I ain't g'wine tuh set by an' hyah yo' scarifyin' him wid yo' mouf."

"Huh," said Daniel scornfully, "who's 'feared o' ole John Thompson anyhow? Reckon ef he wants tuh play he fiddle he's g'wine tuh do it 'thout no for'n interfluence f'om sech as Kinnard Brice. Now I'se g'wine out, an' I don't feel no call tuh tell yo' whuh I'se g'wine nuthah."

So saying, Daniel and his accordion departed, leaving the wife of his bosom to amuse herself as best she might until her escort should appear.

The superstitions of her race rose strong within Mrs. Bostwick as the hours passed and she sat and waited. The moon climbed higher in the heavens and shone as only the August moon knows how to shine. The silence deepened, broken solely by the chirp of a cricket or an occasional chorus of frogs from the stream at the foot of the hill, and the heart of the watcher grew faint within her as midnight approached.

"Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
G'wine fuh tuh carry me home."

The familiar words, at first heard but faintly, gradually grew more distinct, and as the figure of Brother Brice appeared Mrs. Bostwick arose from the doorstep and, opening her mouth to its widest extent, joined loudly in the refrain,—

"G'wine fuh tuh carry me home."

"Is yo' ready, Sistah?" inquired the pastor.

He was an imposing figure to look upon, being clad in the gown in which he delivered his sermons. In its palmy days it was said to have been a gentleman's dressing-gown, but its present owner had dedicated it to the pulpit. Set well on the back of his head was a much rubbed and rusty silk hat.

"Is yo' ready, Sistah?" he repeated.

"Yaas, Bro' Brice, I'se ready," she replied reluctantly. "I sees yo'se got yo' gown on, Bruddah."

"Yaas, Sistah. Dis yere's a mighty solemn 'casion, an' so I'se got meh gown. I'se g'wine down tuh de aidge o' de watah wid yo' an' he'p yo' tuh cas' out de debbil wuckin' inside yo' dat makes yo' b'lieve in sperrits; it's time we was stahtin'."

"Has yo' got ten cents?" inquired Mrs. Bostwick, seeing a possible



loophole of escape. "Tain't no mannah o' use tuh go down dah 'thout some silvah tuh drap intuh de watah."

Brother Brice had not; he said he rarely carried so much with him, as he did not consider it safe. This was an unforeseen complication.

"Hain't yo' got de mattah o' ten cents no whuh, Sistah Bos'wick?" he inquired plaintively. "Yo' mus' a-got paid fuh yo' day's wuck."

Mrs. Bostwick replied that she had a quarter, which she considered too much to waste, but not ten cents, and then produced a cracked china teacup.

"Dis yere ain't de time tuh higgle ovah money," said Brother Brice reprovingly, as he deftly extracted four quarters from the cup, three of which he consigned to his pocket while the lady looked on helpless. "Yo'll take dis quahtah in yo' han's, Sistah, an' drap it in de watah. De oddah t'ree yo' owes tuh de Lawd.

"Whut yo' wants, Sistah Bos'wick," he resumed, as they started slowly down the hill, "whut yo' wants is *con'imence*. I has con'imence dat de Lawd's gwine tuh take keer o' me, an' I gits all I wants. Many a mo'nin' I dunno whuh I'se g'wine tuh git meh dinnah nuh meh suppah, but I has con'imence, an' it's suah tuh come somehow."

"Yaas, Bruddah," said Mrs. Bostwick dutifully.

Meanwhile Daniel had spent the evening playing the accordion to a select party of friends in the village of St. Georges (known as "Sin'goges"), and it was quite eleven o'clock before he started home. Having a long distance to walk, he decided to take a short cut across the fields. He was feeling moderately happy, his friends having expressed their appreciation of his playing by sundry glasses of apple-jack, which Daniel was wont to say brought music to his heart and skill to his fingers. So he went cheerfully and swiftly along until he approached the region of Fiddler's Bridge.

Here he reduced his speed and looked apprehensively about. He was no coward, and when safe at home had often been heard to laugh loudly at those who feared the spirit of the murdered fiddler, but it took a brave man to cross that bridge after ten or eleven o'clock, and Daniel knew it must be nearing midnight.

At last a brilliant idea occurred to him; he would not have to go over the bridge at all. Farther down the stream were stones which might, in an emergency, be used as stepping-stones; he would go that way, since cross he must to reach home. The water was not deep; if he fell in, he could easily wade out again.

"I ain't g'wine tuh look t'odes de bridge nohow," he muttered, "an' den even ef ole John Thompson is a-walkin' I won't see him."

Daniel took his courage in both hands as he slowly made his way through the tangle of briers that bordered the stream. The

road was obscured by the bushes and thick festoons of wild grape-vines which hung from the trees, filling the night air with fragrance.

A dry twig snapped loudly as he stepped upon it.

"'Pears like I can't go 'cross nohow," he gasped, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

Suddenly he remembered his accordion, and opening it began to play softly to give himself courage. Still playing, he started over the stepping-stones with his head turned resolutely away from the bridge. Just as he reached the middle of the stream he heard a loud splash, as of a heavy body striking the water. Involuntarily he turned his head; plainly visible in the moonlight were the white walls on each side of the bridge, and the road leading up the hill; also clearly to be seen was a man running up that road with a truly remarkable speed. But what was that rising out of the water in the shadow of the bridge? Daniel's blood fairly congealed as he stood poised on the slippery stone and watched a large, dark figure rise from the water. It moved. It stood erect, and, turning slowly, faced him.

Flesh and blood could stand no more. Daniel cast his cherished accordion wildly from him and started to flee, but, unfortunately, slipped on the wet stone and precipitated himself full length in the stream. In the water, where old John Thompson reigned supreme, what might not happen to him? With chattering teeth and trembling limbs he managed to crawl to the bank, then, without pausing to look behind him, started for home at the top of his speed.

"Does yo' feel grace a-swellin' in yo' buzzom, Sistah?" inquired Brother Brice as they slowly approached the bridge.

Mrs. Bostwick did not reply, speech having for the time deserted her, and they went on in silence.

They stood for a moment on the bridge casting apprehensive glances down the stream, which shone beneath them like a silver ribbon, with dark shadows in places, and groups of sleepy water-lilies whose leaves glistened in the moonlight.

"Is yo' 'feared, Sistah?" whispered Brother Brice rather faintly. "I ain't g'wine tuh make yo' do nothin' ag'in' yo' will. Ef yo' po' shrinkin' haht's a-failin' yo' an' yo'se bent an' boun' on tuhmin' home, I'se g'wine wid yo' tuh take keer o' yo'. I ain't g'wine tuh leave yo' to yo'seff nohow."

But Mrs. Bostwick shook her head. She did not intend to be reproached hereafter for putting her hand to the plough and looking back.

"Den, Sistah, have con'imence. Have con'imence on me an' de Lawd, we'se g'wine tuh pull yo' thro'. 'Come close tuh de side o' de bridge, Sistah."

Approaching the low railing, they looked over. The water was not far below, and to their excited imagination seemed to quiver strangely.

"Projec' yo' body clean ovah de railin', Sistah," was the next command, "so's we kin see undah de bridge."

Obediently she leaned over as far as possible, his hand resting upon her shoulder, evidently meant to inspire confidence, but very cold and trembling violently.

"W—what I got tuh say?" he whispered.

"'Come fo'th, John Thompson,'" she replied in trembling accents.

"Drap yo' quahtah," he said.

The bit of silver flashed in the moonlight and fell into the water, making widening circles.

"Come fo'th, J—John T—T—Thompson," he called, beginning loudly and boldly, but ending with a faint quaver.

Very softly on the night air came the sound of music. Too petrified to move, they remained leaning far over the railing, looking and listening. The music grew louder; then some distance below the bridge but quite distinct and plainly visible appeared the figure of a man, moving slowly and playing upon some instrument.

The tongue of the Rev. Kinnard, becoming parched and dry, clove to the roof of his mouth as he tried in vain to speak. He grew giddy and clutched his companion for support; he felt himself slipping; in another moment he would be in the water. Rallying all his strength, he clung to the stout shoulder beside him and pulled himself up by it, then, suddenly and violently pushing it from him, turned and fled up the road. A splashing sound, as of something falling into the water, pursued him, and had he paused to look back he would have seen that the bridge stood alone and unoccupied in the moonlight. But he did not pause.

"Lawd ha' mercy," groaned Mrs. Bostwick as she struck the water.

To her intense surprise, she was not immediately seized and drawn down by the avenging ghost of John Thompson, nor did she hear the voice of Brother Brice quelling the evil spirit. Instead, swiftly flying footsteps were distinctly audible, growing rapidly fainter. Mrs. Bostwick struggled to her feet and looked up the road.

"Humph!" she ejaculated.

The discomfort of her present condition and the difficulty of getting on dry land seemed to overcome her fear, so she looked boldly down the stream. The spirit had disappeared, but a dusky figure could be seen scrambling wildly up the bank and vanishing in the bushes. There was a light triangular patch on the seat of the dark trousers which looked strangely familiar to Mrs. Bostwick.

Wading wearily along, the water up to her shoulders and occasionally filling her ears, she encountered a hard object floating towards her. It proved to be an accordion.

"'Pears like I'se saw dis afore," she muttered.

Two dripping figures met on the threshold of the Bostwick homestead.

"Dannel," said one, "huccum yo' tuh git so wet?"

"Well, Rachel," replied the other, "jes' ez I was a-comin' tuh de bridge, I seen a bullfrog a-settin' on 'de bank a-winkin' at me, an' knowin' yo' was partial tuh frogs' legs I struv' tuh git him fuh yo' brek'-fus', honey, an' so doin' fell intuh de watah. Ain't yo' kinder damp yo'seff, Rachel?"

"Dannel," she replied solemnly, "ez I was a-strollin' by de stream in de moonlight, I seen yo' 'cordeen in de watah, an' in tryin' tuh feesh it out I done got in up tuh meh neck. Dat's all, Dannel."

The following Sunday Brother Brice preached his famous sermon on "Con'innence," taking for a general text the power of the righteous to cast out devils. Mrs. Bostwick, who was present, was observed to sniff scornfully several times, and finally left the church.

Next morning when she prepared to go and do the washing at the big house, Daniel, much to his inward satisfaction, saw her array herself again in the gown of many pockets. She patted the one lined with rubber affectionately.

"I'se g'wine tuh fotch yo' home sumpin' nice fuh yo' suppah, honey," she remarked.



## THE WAYFARER

BY ETHNA CARBERY

HE had no crown upon his head  
 When first he met me by the way,  
 His feet upon the thorns had bled,  
 His gown was hoddenn gray;  
 But in his eyes, stars, moon, and sun  
 Were one.

He came, his empty hands outheld;  
 I gave to him with glad good-will,  
 And since my pitying heart rebelled  
 That he should fare so ill,  
 I took his gold head to my breast  
 For rest.

When lo! his empty hands were piled  
 With all gifts craved in dreams of mine,  
 And over me the pilgrim child  
 Spilled benefits divine:  
 Joy, Heart's-Desire, and Peace most fair  
 Fell there.

For my great pity in his stress  
 Because that sad and bare he went,  
 I now am clad with happiness  
 And rich in sweet content:  
 'Twas Love, the King, who crossed my way  
 To-day.

# A SOVEREIGN REMEDY

*By Francis Willing Wharton*

*Author of "Wild Oats"*



HILLIARD glanced round at the ample comfort of the room, and dropping into a chair by the table took out his note-book and ran over the visits still to be paid. There were three only. He would get back in time to dress for dinner if he felt inclined, an amusement he was not often indulged with. Shutting the book, he leaned back and scrutinized his surroundings.

Books up to the ceiling. Ugh! What a good life some people led! Chairs to read them in that would speed the afternoon in the twinkling of an eye, and a big double glass door opening out on white steps that led to a heavenly garden. He stood up to look down the green alleys and stare at the bright beds,—he loved color, crass color,—and then the door opened at the other side of the room and Mr. Bagehot entered.

They had met before. They shook hands and proceeded at once to business, and, sitting opposite each other, after some talk Mr. Bagehot summed up the case.

"The truth is, Dr. Hilliard,"—he spoke slowly,—“it's just the absence of symptoms that worries me. My daughter, as I tell you, has been thoroughly examined by specialists; she has everything that I can give her,”—he glanced about,—“the house”——he waved his hand——“is run to suit her pleasure; we have a garden-party to-night,—she would have it at night, lanterns, music, and so forth; but with it all she loses steadily day by day. She used to be a plump, round, pink-cheeked little thing, now she looks as though a breath of wind might blow her away. We have travelled, we have done everything, and I come to you as a last hope. I hear you have extraordinary power of diagnosis; I beg that you will exert your faculty to the utmost. I have not told her of your visit, but she is in the house. Shall I call her?”

Hilliard hesitated a moment. “Mr. Bagehot,” he answered, “in cases like this I would much rather see the person when not made conscious by acknowledged scrutiny. Will you give me the opportunity of meeting her socially and let me judge of her when she is not prepared?”



"There is something in that idea," responded the older man slowly; "it is always difficult to get a just impression of anyone who is made self-conscious beforehand. Why do you not come to-night? She will suspect nothing."

"Excellent!" Hilliard rose. "You say that Dr. Young sounded her lungs and Carter her heart?"

Mr. Bagehot nodded.

The young man took up his hat. "I will then go." He bowed. "I had expected to pay two visits this evening. I must get them in this afternoon, so if you will excuse me——"

The older man also rose and went to the door with him. "At what hour is your affair?" The Doctor stopped in the hall.

"Eight-thirty—nine—whenever you like," and they bowed and parted.

It was a warm night in May; there must have been a garden somewhere in the neighborhood, for a waft of scent came in the open window. Hilliard shut with a bang a musty book he had been reading and, springing to his feet, stretched his long arms.

"Ho for a night in the gay world!" he said to himself with the sardonic smile with which he viewed human weakness in himself as in others, a smile with which, however, he did not favor his patients, and then he proceeded to dress.

Being intensely practical, orderly, and hard-working, he usually allowed himself very little time for "gew-gaws," as he called clothes, and "flummery," as he called society, but he had a passion for the sensuous side of life which he recognized and held in check.

To take a bath and shave at eight o'clock at night, to spend time over the brushing of his too curly black hair, to put on his dress clothes, adjust a flower in his button-hole—this filled an hour of extreme luxury and enjoyment, and he gave another of his contemptuous grins as he stared at himself in the glass.

He had studied women exhaustively as patients, as women he had avoided them carefully since his college days, when he had discovered his ready appreciation of their power. Through the force of a conscience which he kept studiously concealed, and an ambition in which he gloried, he had succeeded in letting them signify alone.

It was not the women he looked forward to even now, it was the garden, the lights among the trees, the music; he knew what easy enchantment these things could work on him, and he felt like a school-boy on a lark.

With his light overcoat over his arm he strolled along till he reached Mr. Bagehot's great house, which loomed in the quiet street like a Florentine palace, and, entering the door, he already caught sounds of

the music from the garden. He gave his coat and hat to a servant and, advancing through the people, who seemed, some of them, at least, to prefer the house, he sought his host. He heard some woman whose voice was not as low as she supposed ask, "Who is that black-haired man who looks like a Jew?" but he was used to that, and reaching Mr. Bagehot at this moment he shook hands with him.

His host glanced into the young man's face and could not help feeling inwardly discouraged. "She won't come out to this muddy-skinned, hook-nosed fellow," he thought; "she will set him down hard and talk to someone else. However, it can't be helped; it is his own idea," and he looked round for his daughter.

"She's over there, I think," he said, "on the steps leading to the garden; let us go and find her at once."

"By all means," responded Hilliard, and he followed his host until they stopped at the top of the marble steps; a group of people stood laughing and talking there.

"I have asked her to be nice to you," whispered his host nervously. "I told her a confounded lie, and said I knew your family and that you—er—needed friends and acquaintances."

The young man broke into a sudden, hearty laugh. It was a contagious, pleasant sound, and Mr. Bagehot found himself joining with a chuckle. "It's terrible what we will do," he added, and advanced to the young people in front of them.

"Irene," he said, speaking with nervous pomposity, "here is Dr. Hilliard, whom I want you to know. Dr. Hilliard, my daughter."

A little, slender creature disentangled herself from the others and, stepping into the light from the library door, held out her hand.

"How do you do?" she said. "Papa has told me of you and says you want to be amused, so it's very nice of us to be giving a party for you, isn't it? Shall we come inside for a while and see what we look like? and then I'll show you the garden if you like."

They turned together, and she led him to a seat in one of the rooms where a few people strayed about, but there was less noise and distraction; then, seating herself near him, she looked him over with a cool, uninterested scrutiny.

She looked as her father had said, as though a strong wind might blow her away. It was hard to believe she had ever been round and plump, harder still to imagine that little, tired face warm with color. Her eyes had been fair-sized to begin with, a deep blue-gray, but now they stared out on the world, large and bored and rather hard in expression.

"Why are you to be amused?" she began, "I couldn't quite make out, and I was in a hurry dressing, some people had come. Is it just because papa has taken a fancy to you, or what?"

Hilliard leaned back and clasped his dexterous brown fingers about his knee.

"That sounds very nice," he said. "I'm not in the habit of having people take fancies to me, so I particularly like the idea. I suppose it happens to you all the time, doesn't it? Do you get tired after a while?"

She looked at him with the same weary indifference. "You are quite wrong," she responded. "I am not that kind at all. People like the house sometimes and papa sometimes, but me—I am not by the way of inspiring liking."

"Don't you want people to like you?" returned the young man. "I thought all women wanted that, even when they weren't prepared to give anything in return. Now, with you and me, for instance, I should have ignorantly believed that it would have entertained and amused you for me to fall head over heels in love with your blue eyes, or are they gray?" He smiled a curious, quizzical smile that softened the hawk-look in his face. She stared gravely at him without a drop of added color on her cheek.

"That is the most shamelessly flirtatious remark I've heard to-night," she said. "But it's only a sham. You aren't that kind, really. Confess it. I have some instinct, and I'm not nineteen."

Hilliard broke into his unexpectedly merry laugh. "Dear me," he answered, "it's hard to be called down so early in the evening, but if you will have the truth, I am not that way inclined as a rule, and I don't go in for talking to women about their eyes, but yours are—well, they took my fancy."

If I keep at it, he thought, I shall get there.

"You are just the right kind of man to show the garden to, aren't you?" She rose. "You will make the lanterns and music seem not quite wasted, and yet to look at you——" She stuck her small chin up a little with a cool impertinence, and gave a faint smile, the first he had seen.

"To look at me," retorted Hilliard, standing beside her and looking down—a long way down—from his height to the slender, graceful figure, "to look at me you would not say I was the man for a stroll in the moonlight. Quite true, and yet haven't you learned, my dear young lady, that ugly men with sharp eyes and hook noses have ten times the capacity for passion that your handsome, blue-eyed lad can boast?"

Miss Baghot looked at him with a spark of animation in her eyes. "Learned," she answered. "I haven't had a chance to learn anything in life but how to write notes and fix flowers! Come, we will go outside," and turning abruptly, she led the way into the garden.

Hilliard felt himself sliding off into fairyland. The light streamed

from the windows and lit up the formal walks and box-hedged alleys of the garden, and as they got beyond and walked into the walled fruit-garden there were bright-colored lanterns throwing a rosy tint upon the walks, then later, when they reached the border of the lawn, there was the moon.

"It isn't safe for me to be round loose in all this," said the young man as they entered the English garden with its high wall, the fruit trained against it. "I shall lose my head and bay like a dog. Flowers and lights and the night-time are what I like best in the world and what I never see. My usual evening surroundings are my dusty, overcrowded study or somebody's sick-room, with the light low and voices hushed."

She looked at him steadily, with less indifference, he thought; perhaps it was the lanterns that deceived him. He went on: "If one wants to succeed, one must choose in this life; you can't put your strength into many things. I am ambitious. Well, then, I can't expect to gratify my senses as well. They must be bullied and put in irons if they mutiny. It works very well and it rather amuses one to know one could make a fool of oneself over more than one thing if one liked, and then not to like. I have chosen my work; into that I put my capability for passion. Some day I shall allow myself a wife, and I shall love her most unconscionably."

He was getting there, there was no doubt of it this time; those firmly closing lips were parted a little. Had he thought her tired-looking? It was the absence of the spirit; it had now come. He was silent, looking down at her, making her out. It was Miss Bagehot who spoke.

"So there are people in the world like that, are there?" she said slowly. "I suspected it, but I don't think I ever knew one before."

Hilliard laughed. "We aren't generally loose," he responded; "most of us are shut up." Then added, "You must forgive me for breaking out like this; I don't often do it; I don't know when I have unloaded such personalities on anyone, but as I said before, it's the lights, the flowers, and"—he made her a deep bow—"and your ladyship's eyes." The last words had a note of pure friendliness in them that did what nothing else had done, invaded her white cheek with a faint color.

"You are nice," she said suddenly; "I like you."

He bowed again, and brought his laughing glance to bear on her face. "The compliment is returned."

"Tell me some more things," said the girl. "Let us walk on, and I will give you a picture of such a pretty life: my own. And it's killing me. However, that's only incidental; we all have to go sometime. But to begin with, look once carefully at the garden. I designed the

hanging of every lantern. I have one talent, such a useful one!—for dressing up a garden! I'll show you the whole place," and, walking slowly, they went the circuit of the grounds.

She gave him as they wandered a half-jesting account of the passage of her days, and as they entered a little arbor, also lantern hung, she summed it up contemptuously.

"In fact, papa treats me like an orchid, and I am beginning to believe that I am a rank little weed who would flourish better without the steam heat and prepared earth of the greenhouse. And sometimes I have such a yearning to feel the breath of life blow untempered on me, even though it were fierce and I had to bend before it like my fellows."

"Have you never had a bad time?" Hilliard returned, smiling, but with brows that drew together in something half wonder, half envy.

She considered gravely. "No," she answered, "I don't think I ever have. It's partly because I love so few people; it makes one less vulnerable. I think I started with a heart somewhere," she added, with another of her faint smiles, "but it's—it's—getting atrophied from lack of use. Listen,"—she broke off and held up her hand,—“that is a very nice tune, don't you think? I chose it.” The music filled the little place with its rhythm.

"A waltz, isn't it?" said Hilliard. "I can't dance. I never had time to learn or anyone disposed to teach me, but one feels it in one's head, if one don't know it with one's feet."

"I used to dance a great deal,"—Miss Bagehot shrugged her shoulders,—“but it isn't as good fun as it looks. I'm not strong enough now; I should keel over, I think, before the dance was over.”

"That would depend on your partner, wouldn't it?" responded Hilliard. He had folded his arms on his chest and gazed down into her face with an intent study of it.

"How on my partner?" returned the girl.

"If you liked him enough, you would see the dance through," said Hilliard coolly.

She looked at him. "Perhaps yes, but then I shouldn't."

"Are you incapable of human affection?" he answered, allowing a little of that grimmer smile of his to curve his lips.

"No, I suppose not," she said slowly. "But you are not talking of affection, you mean that queer, mixed-up hallucination we call falling in love. I used to sit ready for it, with round, expectant eyes, when I first went to balls and parties. 'Now for it,' I thought, as each young man approached, 'perhaps it's this one—or this one—or this one,' but it never came off. On the whole, I didn't have a very good chance. I had some proposals but no lovers,—at least, I didn't think they were lovers."



Hilliard smiled. "Poor fellows, they did their best; it's rather hard to hold them so cheap."

She gave a little shake to her head. She had hair whose silvery fairness not even the pink lamps could turn to yellow, fine-spun hair, each thread of it crinkled. "Oh, they liked the house and papa, as I said. Can't you think anyone might like to have papa for a father? But their feelings for me were tolerant and not highly colored."

"You frightened them," said Hilliard slowly. He had forgotten to look at her as a physician, he was thinking of her as a woman. "You aren't very big, but I think you are rather alarming. I know you'd frighten me."

There was a moment's pause. The music deepened its notes; they were very sweet and rather inclined to encourage ill-considered speech. Hilliard felt it and went with the tide. He had a grim sneer inside too; he thought himself a fool for his pains.

"You see," he began gravely, "you are spoiled; you don't know, you don't understand, how difficult it is to ask for things when one hasn't been used to getting them. You always get what you ask for; naturally, your demand is couched in vigorous language; but if you had been thrown down hard by life a few times, it would be different. I speak," he ended with a smile, "from experience."

"Do you?" The girl had slipped down on the bench that ran round the arbor. "Tell me about it." She looked up at him with such charming, eager eyes that he forgot that they had seemed hard to him before.

"Oh, it would take too long," the young man laughed, with half a frown; "till three years ago I never got anything else but knocks; they came right along. They were good for me, they made me tough, but they weren't amusing."

He paused; her eyes led him on.

"It began when I was about seven," he searched his memory. "My father and my mother both died and my grandparents took me; they were kind, but bored, awfully bored. They hadn't a child in the house for thirty years, and it was rather trying. They couldn't remember what a child did, so they gave me food and clothes and a bed, and that was all; they never thought of me in between the fulfilling of those duties. I remember hanging up my stocking one Christmas Eve; the servants had discoursed on Santa Claus. When I looked into it in the morning it was still empty. That was rather a facer, I can remember—it was rather a facer."

"Do you mean," said Miss Bagehot, "that it was quite, quite empty? But that was horrible!"

His eyes rested on her countenance; its dismay surprised him. He laughed.

"It didn't do me any harm, it taught me a lesson." Then, seeing her still distressed eyes, he smiled with a change of expression. "Don't—don't take it so hard," he said gently; "it happened twenty-five years ago, and here I am, healthy and happy and getting to the top of my profession. I won't tell you anything more if you mind it so much. I think it's amusing and instructive. I am explaining to you why your proposals didn't have the clamorous ring you expected."

She leaned back and dropped her eyes. "Go on, please," she said.

"Well," Hilliard resumed, "I was not a success in school somehow. I was always getting into fights because the boys called my clothes names,—I admit they were queer looking,—and they also abused my features. Fights interfered with work. I was expelled at one place. I had fought with six boys in as many days and came out even, three beatings, three successes, but the Head Master lost patience and didn't see it. Then I did get along and at college studied medicine. I hadn't any money to speak of, so I worked as night-clerk in a drug-store to pay for my board and my drinks—I took a good many. Do you mind?" He looked at her with his critical smile plain on his face; he was seeing where she stood, and she felt it.

"It depends," answered Miss Bagehot slowly, "on your age, your companions—on a great many things. Go on."

It was an answer that opened Hilliard's keen eyes very wide; the sarcasm fled from his face, it grew serious.

"I worked pretty hard," he went on, "and tried for honors and missed it; that was a facer too; I minded that even more than the empty stocking. Then I started to practise after a year or two in the hospitals, and I was pretty cocksure of myself, and then—some of my patients died—that's the end—you are never the same man again; after that you believe in God, and never so long as you live do you believe in yourself."

There was another pause; the music had ceased while he was talking and now began again, a crooning air that only faintly stirred the atmosphere.

"Do you understand?" said Hilliard, leaning towards her. "Do you know now why a man stumbles and makes a poor show when he asks a woman to marry him? And the more you care,—the more madly you care,—the duller your words, the humbler your petition. Don't you see?"

Their eyes met. A bright wave of color flooded the slender oval of her face; her lids drooped; she was silent. The music played on; they sat like two statues, the young man's eyes eagerly watching her white, drooped lids, her flushed cheeks, her lips slightly tremulous. The girl clasped her fan tightly, her breath coming quickly. The music stopped; she gave a sigh and then stood up.

"I ought to go back," she said, and without another word led the way through the narrow doorway.

It was Hilliard who talked, disjointedly enough, but still talked, as they walked rather swiftly through the garden. When they reached the wide marble steps they stopped.

"Everyone is getting supper inside," said Miss Bagehot, raising her eyes to his face; "come in." They mounted the steps and stood in the light, warm room.

"I don't think I care for any supper," said Hilliard. "I think I'll say good-night."

She did not offer to shake hands with him, she stood with her eyes on his face.

"Papa won't like it," she returned. "He hates people not to eat in his house—don't go."

Hilliard gave a glance at the crowded room and shook his head. "I couldn't," he said. "Good-night," and without further words he bowed and left her, and as he entered the hall turned and saw her joined by three or four people from the other room. He stood a moment and watched her raise those wide-open, indifferent eyes of hers, but saw that the color still flushed her cheek. Then he found his coat and hat and walked to the door.

"Dr. Hilliard," said Mr. Bagehot's voice.

The young man stopped and turned towards him.

"Won't you come in here a moment," said the older man hurriedly, "just a word." He shut the door behind them. They stood alone in a little breakfast room.

"My daughter—you thought her——" His kind eyes looked eagerly into Hilliard's face?

Hilliard paused a moment; a slight, dark color had mounted to his cheek.

"Your daughter," he said slowly, "suffers only, I think, from the need of one thing—an interest, an emotion. She would be well if she had to bear a great sorrow or a great joy."

Bagehot stared at him. "Your prescription, Doctor," he returned, "is somewhat difficult to administer."

The young man bowed and moved towards the door, then turned on his heel and faced his host.

"May I be presumptuous," he said hurriedly, "and ask if you will permit me to—come again to your delightful house, and this time as a visitor only?"

"I shall always be glad to see you," answered Bagehot absently; "let me see you to the door," and he shut it behind the young man with another, "I shall be delighted; come soon."

# ANTOINE'S LOVES

*By Caroline Ticknor*



## I.

ANTOINE ST. LUKE was supping with the Widow Cassner, and a good supper it was, daintily served and nicely cooked. Everything that the clever little woman did was executed with artistic feeling; and she herself was trim and neat and fair to look upon, with large, dark eyes and beautiful, white teeth.

Antoine admired the pretty little widow tremendously. They had been playfellows in early childhood, and in their youth the best of friends and comrades; and then their paths had stretched apart, or, rather, hers had suddenly diverged, while his had gone on much the same. A solitary, secluded path it was, hemmed in on either side by a wall which his own unsocial spirit had erected.

From his first school-days Antoine's world had been the world of books; he knew no other, nor cared to interest himself in outside explorations. His earliest ambition had been to own a library, and for the attainment of this end he had drudged and striven and denied himself the absolute necessities of ordinary existence.

As time went on he rapidly acquired a taste for unique volumes and rare editions. He hunted in old book-stalls and haunted the musty little shops where curious treasures were apt to be discovered. He hobnobbed with the well-known dealers and learned of them what next to covet.

And now, at forty years of age, he was the proud possessor of a valuable library, and nothing else. His small abode was shabby to the last degree, almost unfurnished. It was no wonder that the tasteful dwelling of pretty Mrs. Cassner seemed a bright paradise of cheer and comfort.

The widow's sitting-room was simple in all its furnishings, but ah, so cosy and attractive; and by the little air-tight stove the plump presiding genius of the place formed a most pleasing picture as she busied herself knitting bright-colored yarns into gay stripes for afghans.

How easily she did things! Yes, and how well! Such muffins, and peach preserve, and potted chicken!

As Antoine sat upon the other side of the small, polished zinc on

which rested the air-tight stove, he became suddenly aware of a strange tugging at his heart-strings. He thought of his own cheerless rooms; his meals hurriedly partaken of at restaurants or boarding-houses, or in the solitude of his apartments; of his own lonely life extending on and on, until it ended in a forlorn old age cheered only by his books.

He had indulged his ruling passion, and now he was beginning to experience, instead of the content which should accompany realized ambition, a consciousness of longing and disappointment.

Had his life's struggle been worth the while? He suddenly began to doubt it.

"What ails you, Antoine, you've hardly said a word since supper?" his vis-a-vis was saying. Her voice was sympathetic; she pitied her old friend's loneliness and grieved over his threadbare clothes and badly-tied cravat. Although his junior by a couple of years, she could not but regard him with an almost motherly interest, he was so young and guileless regarding all worldly wisdom.

She laid aside her knitting and came and stood by Antoine and touched his forehead lightly with her firm, shapely fingers.

"Nothing the matter with your temperature, Antoine," she laughed. "I guess you're only moody or absent-minded."

The touch of her light fingers caused Antoine's heart to beat with great rapidity, and all at once the vision of his cheerless home was supplemented by one in which his charming vis-a-vis became a fixture. And why should not this vision be materialized?

He hesitated. It was a matter of choosing between the two. He knew he could not serve two masters.

The pretty Widow Cassner had a small income which she eked out by putting up preserves and jellies, and by letting her rooms to one or two young ladies. She had worked hard, and her life had not been one of unalloyed ease and enjoyment, though no one would have dreamed so from her bright, cheerful bearing.

What had Antoine to offer?

His books. Ah, they would bring a goodly sum. He knew a score of dealers who longed to gather in his many treasures. If they were sold, he would be able to provide handsomely for any woman of simple tastes.

He suddenly determined to sell his books. He would not let himself pause to consider the cost of such a sacrifice. He was beside the little widow, pouring into her ears an eloquent appeal. His library was at her feet—"rare prints" and "old editions," "original boards" and "uncut edges."

His arm was around her. He begged her to take pity upon his loneliness; to make his cheerless home a heavenly paradise with her bright presence.

The widow hesitated. She had pitied Antoine so many years that the next step was not so difficult to take. His terrible absorption in his books had always been a mighty barrier between them; with that removed, Antoine might prove really companionable.

He poured forth pitiful accounts of his endeavors to cook meals for himself on a wretched oil-stove up in his bedroom. He pictured his attempts to keep the coffee-grounds out of his cup, and his vain efforts to manufacture good oatmeal porridge. And then the widow thought of her own bright amber coffee and well-cooked breakfast food, and her compassion finally triumphed.

## II.

ANTOINE was seated in his library, in his one easy-chair; before him stood a small table on which were spread some of his dearest treasures.

First, his Shakespeare Quarto, that prize which by a lucky chance had fallen to his lot. He turned its leaves with gentle, reverent touch. How many book-lovers had coveted it and had endeavored to get possession of it! He thought of the round price that it would bring, and closed it with a stifled sigh. He took up one of his pet volumes of the early dramatists and ran it through with loving touch. Beside it lay some of his first editions,—Walton, Ruskin, Rossetti; Hazlitt, Keats, and others,—dear to his heart. What a magnificent specimen of printing this little book contained! And where might one procure a finer bit of binding than that which he now held with tender care. Ah, how that set of Chaucer would be snapped up by Wilkinson or Whitely!

He plunged his hands deep in his pockets and whistled gayly and stamped about his rooms and eyed his volumes carelessly, and sought his bed, clinging to the glad vision of the petite and pretty widow, whose light touch upon his forehead had set his heart a-thumping, and whose unrivalled muffins and peach preserve remained fixed in his waking consciousness.

Wrapped in these pleasant thoughts he fell asleep, and dreamed, not of the widow, but of his Shakespeare Quarto.

This was not strange, because, like all his fellow-men, he was a poor, weak creature of habit, who needed to be very much on with the new love before he could be wholly off with the first mistress of his heart.

Antoine had decided upon one line of conduct regarding the sale of his rare volumes. He would not haggle over them, nor suffer the prolonged agony of parting with them one by one; but, having notified the various dealers of his intention, he would accept the largest lump-sum offered him; then let the curtain fall upon one act of his small individual drama.

In the days which ensued Antoine seemed a changed being. He had



emerged from his secluded, introspective life into the lively atmosphere of everyday existence. He turned the key upon his library and passed the musty book-stores and mousing antiquarians without a wavering glance. He accompanied the Widow Cassner to various social gatherings, took short trips into the country, listened to her instructions regarding suitable neckwear and a new style of waistcoats, and forswore heavy, hob-nail boots.

It was with the shrewd Whitely that the bargain was at last concluded. That watchful dealer had long eyed Antoine's books with more than friendly interest, and it was with a quick, triumphant step that he departed from the modest habitation which sheltered so many rare editions.

When he had gone, Antoine stood for a while gazing at the large check which he held in his hand. Then he glanced stealthily about his library, as if afraid to face the many reproachful volumes which peered out at him. His Shakespeare Quarto shrunk visibly away from him; his first edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Maid's Tragedy" verily slid far back upon its shelf, as if to escape his notice; his beloved Chaucer already wore an air of cynical aloofness, while his rare Goldsmith looked sullen and reproachful.

Great beads of perspiration stood on Antoine's brow; he took several quick strides about the room; he stared helplessly at his treasured books, now his no longer, and stretched his arms out towards them as in dumb protest. Pausing before his Shakespeare Quarto, he gazed at it in abject misery until his eyes grew moist.

"What foolishness," he exclaimed savagely, turning abruptly on his heel; and, striding from the room, he turned the key upon his volumes and regrets.

Half an hour later he was ensconced beside the pretty widow upon her best plush sofa. He had regained his spirits; he laughed and talked incessantly and made plans for their future. He showed her the check he had received from Whitely and bade her calculate how comfortable they needs must be with this neat sum.

The little widow watched him with mingled admiration and anxiety. Antoine had never seemed to care at all for money, how then should he be so elated by its possession. She flattered herself that Antoine's love for her had wrought this transformation. How handsome Antoine was, and how distinguished looking! He did not understand the art of love-making as poor dear Cassner did, but he deserved to be well taken care of by some capable woman who could keep him away from musty, dusty books.

"Do you feel well, Antoine?"

Again the widow's light touch was on his forehead, and this time she puckered her smooth brow and looked at him with some concern.

"Your temperature's not right, Antoine; you're very feverish to-night," she said with a touch of anxiety.

## III.

ANTOINE's books had gone. Only the rows of vacant shelves remained to trouble their owner with painful reminiscences. But Antoine refused to reminisce. One chapter in his life had closed, and he was done with it forever; he had determined to go straight on; he would not turn back to scan a single page that was behind.

He busied himself with various outside interests and strove to carry out the manifold suggestions made by his lady-love for his personal betterment. He thought about his clothes, brushed his hair properly, ate his meals at regular intervals, and took a normal amount of exercise. Withal, he tried to fancy he was supremely happy and had achieved the summit of earthly bliss.

One bright and sparkling April morning Antoine awoke with a realization that this day was a vital one for him, fraught with far-reaching consequences.

Before its sun should set his books would have been sold at auction. This day his many treasured volumes were to be scattered far and wide. Each book that he had loved and won would be ere night borne off by some chance purchaser or greedy dealer. This thought tormented him, although he strove to banish it by dwelling on the fact that the books had already gone from his possession, and his remaining interest in them must needs expire shortly and pass entirely from his consciousness.

He vowed it should be so, and it was for this reason he had chosen this especial day for a trip out of town with the fair widow: they had planned one more journey of inspection to a trim, cosey dwelling which had charmed the fancies of both and which they had at last decided to rent.

Antoine felt that he wished to be as far away as possible from the sacrifice of his past idols, and eagerly arranged for a day in the country.

They were to start at eleven, and Antoine, in his haste to get away, found himself ready to depart long before ten o'clock. How slowly the moments crept by! He looked repeatedly at his watch, and finally determined to take a stroll to while away the time.

He would walk up town towards the Park in order to put more distance between him and the book-sale. Ah, but there was a florist's shop in just the opposite direction, where he had planned to buy some violets for his lady-love. He purchased these, and then, having begun to walk that way, kept on until—yes, he had reached the very corner where the sale of his books was to be held. Once there, he glanced in through the window, determined that he would not cross the threshold.

As he stood there he spied several familiar faces grouped in the

auction-room. He could see Lamson looking at something with a keen air of relish; he was undoubtedly waiting to gobble up his first edition of Milton's early poems, printed in 1645; and there was that fox Billings, who had for years coveted his Shakespeare Quarto. Ah, he must drop in for just half an hour to see what prices the things would bring. He still had plenty of time to spare.

## IV.

THE Widow Cassner, arrayed in her best walking-suit and new spring bonnet, waited in vain for the arrival of Antoine; she peered out of the window and watched the timepiece on the mantel impatiently. No Antoine came. At last she laid aside her outside things, thinking that he had been detained and would come later in the day, but as the hours crept by and he failed to appear, she became really anxious lest some mischance had overtaken him.

She little dreamed that Antoine was quite oblivious of everything save what the auctioneer was saying. He had forgotten all except that here his treasures were. This was his last opportunity to see them once again, to handle them, to—ah, perchance to secure them!

And when the day was spent, nothing remained of that large, comfortable check which Whitely had bestowed upon him, and which he and the widow had planned to invest so wisely; but in its place Antoine had nearly all of the dearest of his treasures back again. He could not secure all, yet he was satisfied. He gathered together in two heavy bundles his choicest volumes, in order that even one night should not elapse before they were again under his roof, and leaving the others to be packed and sent to him as soon as possible, he hurried homewards, weary and worn, but filled with exultation.

## V.

ANTOINE sat in his library, and on the table before him were spread his dearest volumes. He held them in his hands and stroked their covers; he turned their pages gently and reverently. The joy and happiness of life had once more fluttered back to him. He laid his hand upon his Shakespeare Quarto and scrutinized it lovingly; he turned it over carefully to see if it had sustained any injury; he raised it to his lips and kissed it with adoration.

Suddenly his attention was arrested by the sound of someone entering the room without, and the door of his library opened quietly. There stood the Widow Cassner, beautiful in her new spring bonnet, but pale and anxious after her day's suspense.

With woman's intuition she grasped the situation at a glance.

"Antoine," she said reproachfully.

And then Antoine remembered. He jumped up hurriedly and in

dismay, realizing for the first time the enormity of his offence. How could he have forgotten her completely!

"You have been buying back your books, Antoine?" she questioned. "You could not bear to have them go. You were unhappy without them."

"Yes, yes," he said remorsefully. "I couldn't let them go. Old Billings was determined to have my Shakespeare Quarto, and 'twas a struggle to keep my Milton and my Chaucer out of that Lamson's clutches. My Johnson's gone, but I have saved my early dramatists." He ran his fingers over them caressingly, and then he looked up guiltily.

"You never can forgive me, and I can never forgive myself! These are not all. I've bought back everything that I could get. I've spent the money, all I had! There's nothing left! What must you think of me? Despise me all you can, it's not a thousandth part of what I deserve. I forgot everything except my books. I had no thought beyond getting them back. And now"—with a wild gesture of despair Antoine sank down and bowed his head upon the table.

The Widow Cassner stood in the doorway watching him. Tears filled her eyes and rolled down her plump cheeks. She saw Antoine fading away from her. She had deceived herself into believing that he could learn to be content in her practical world; she had deceived herself into believing that he could love her better than his books. After so long a friendship she should have known him better.

She crossed the room and laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"Never mind, Antoine," she said compassionately. "It is all right. I'm glad you've got your books. You would have missed them sadly. I never could have made up for them. It's better for us to be good friends—just that, and nothing more. When you feel lonely, you can drop in just the same and have a cup of tea. Good-night, Antoine. If you don't mind, I'd rather go alone."

When she had gone Antoine remained for a long time with his head bowed upon the table. Then he sat up and looked about him like one completely dazed, trying to realize all that this day's experience meant to him.

Never had the little widow seemed lovelier in his eyes than when she took her leave of him with quiet dignity. His dream of a bright, cosey fireside ornamented by her presence was ended forever.

It was long past midnight when Antoine rose at last and began mechanically to put his books back on the shelves. As he picked them up one by one and tenderly replaced them, a quiet, soothing sense of their companionship stole over him, and when he had restored them to their old places his knitted brow had cleared.

The Shakespeare Quarto was still upon the centre of the table in solemn state, and by its side he found a crushed and crumpled paper

containing the bunch of violets he had bought for the widow. They were still fragrant, and he placed them in a glass of water close by his beloved volume, and the crushed violets slowly revived and raised their drooping heads and shed their fragrance over the Shakespeare Quarto.



## IN ROSE TIME

BY WILLA SIBERT CATHER

O *H this is the joy of the rose;  
That it blows,  
And goes.*

Winter lasts a five months,  
Spring-time stays but one,  
Yellow blow the rye-fields  
When the rose is done.  
Pines are clad at Yuletide  
When the birch is bare,  
And the holly's greenest  
In the frosty air.

Sorrow keeps a stone house  
Builted grim and gray,  
Pleasure hath a straw thatch  
Hung with lanterns gay.  
On her petty savings  
Niggard Prudence thrives,  
Passion ere the moonset  
Bleeds a thousand lives.

Virtue hath a warm heart—  
Folly's dead and drowned,  
Friendship hath her own when  
Love is underground.  
Ah! for me the madness  
Of the spendthrift flower,  
Burning myriad sunsets  
In a single hour.

*For this is the joy of the rose;  
That it blows,  
And goes.*

# A LADY, A MORTAL, AND THE FOUR HUNDRED

*By Annulet Andrews*



YES, I was with Mrs. John Stanton after I left Lady Mary Mandeville, or, rather, after Lady Mary left me, for she brought me over as her companion and personal attendant, and left me here because she had not the money to take me back with her.

Odd! do you say? Oh, not at all; not having enough money is quite a way with the aristocracy. Lady Mary is one of its greatest spendthrifts.

Her Ladyship gave me an excellent recommendation, and Mr. Stanton at once secured me as companion to his wife.

There, Madam, turn your head on the other side, and I can brush your hair better.

You have heard of Mrs. John Stanton? I suppose everybody has, for she was a personage in New York three years ago. Mr. Stanton seemed rather a pompous gentleman, if I may presume to criticise him, and when he fetched me home with him from the agency he entered his front door—well, something in the manner a Lord Mayor would enter his carriage of state for the first time. I was sure from his style that Mrs. Stanton would be a lady who would wear diamonds in the morning.

Mr. Stanton fetched me into the library, and said with a note of pride in his voice as he entered: "I say, Nell, here is a girl I think you might like. She has been with Lady Mandeville as her companion." The person he addressed was a slender little lady in a green gown with a quantity of red-gold hair, and altogether she reminded me of a golden narcissus by an English brook, she was so gracious and fresh and fragrant as she came forward and extended her little white hand to me warmly.

"I think," she said, turning to her husband with a queer, derisive little smile, "that I should like this young lady even if she had not been employed by Lady Mandeville, for she is so very nice."

Mr. Stanton left us, and then Madam asked me to sit down, and in a few moments I felt as if I were in my own home, and the tears welled



up a bit in my eyes and my voice trembled, for I had met no one quite like her in all my life—no one who seemed to combine the dignity and grace of a great lady with the simplicity and honesty of a little child. She asked me about home, about my life and my tastes, not in an inquisitive way, nor yet as if she were doing it to entertain me, but just as if she really cared.

Of course, you can't live in an American family long without finding out all about its members, for while they do not speak out everything they know and feel to their equals, as our English gentry, they treat the members of their own household much as Christians are supposed to treat their Maker, from whom no secrets are hidden. I learned that Mr. Stanton was a Western gentleman—a self-made man, I believe they call them. Mrs. Stanton was from the South, wherever that may be, though from what she said to me now and then I fancy it is a country where the inhabitants are gentlemen and ladies or black people. She never talked before Mr. Stanton of her home or her people.

What is the Four Hundred, Madam? You can't say exactly? Well, nobody seems able to. When I first came to New York I thought it was something military, like the Royal Life Guards, but when Mr. Stanton talked of it so much, I found it was a term applied to the leading wealthy and fashionable people in New York society. Mr. Stanton was very ambitious to be one of the Four Hundred, and he used to go over the names of all the people in that body constantly. Madam was amiable and patient and kind, and she it was who, without the least effort on her part, made every forward step towards the goal of his ambition. The people Mrs. Stanton preferred were of the artistic world, and Mr. Stanton said it was all right to begin that way, as he heard the Four Hundred were gone on cranks. Gradually, though, as one after another of the Four Hundred began dropping in to Mrs. Stanton's evenings, the artistic people began to drop off, and then came a series of dinner parties. The first one was the prologue to the others.

Mr. Stanton met his guests at the door, standing right back of the flunkey and washing his hands, as it were, in the warm, scented atmosphere. As Mrs. —, I've forgotten her name, but she owns a crown of yellow diamonds and leads the Four Hundred—well, as he greeted her the poor gentleman looked as elated as our Universal Provider, Mr. Whitely, would appear upon leading a Duchess to the lace department.

On the other hand, Mrs. Stanton did not seem the least awed or disconcerted. But one could see that the great ladies of the Four Hundred felt condescending and superior.

Mr. Stanton introduced me as Morton, the former companion of

## 100 A Lady, a Mortal, and the Four Hundred

Lady Mary Mandeville, and I saw Madam blush at it way down at the end of the table as we sat down to dinner.

During the entrée a pause came, and the whole company heard these words fall from the lips of the lady on Mr. Stanton's right—the yellow-diamond lady:

"Yes, we have a summer palace at Oyster Bay, but we are not going down this year, so if you and Mrs. Stanton want to economize in pew-rent, we will turn our servants' pew over to you for the summer."

The words came boldly and insolently from the lady's lips. They were meant to cut, and the poor host's face turned scarlet. A soft, clear laugh from Madam filled in the gap, and she said, just as if she had taken the lady's remark for a huge joke:

"Oh! that is kind of you, and we will accept it if you will occupy our servants' quarters in town."

If Madam had failed in one note of her voice, or had once let go her angelic and innocently good-humored expression of countenance, the whole thing would have been flat and vulgar, but she did it just beautifully, with the art and grace of a real, true lady.

That was why her shaft told so well. The great lady bit her lips, instead of biting Madam's head off, as she would have liked. Some of the gentlemen forgot themselves and laughed, as the nobles did once when one of them knocked the Prince of Wales's hat off in Parliament, then, in horror of their levity, straightened themselves up and began telling stupid jokes. All the ladies looked amused, as only ladies can when they see a grand personage of their own sex driven to cover. As for Madam, she was more brilliant and bewitching that evening than I had ever known her to be. Nothing could stop her gayety, though poor Mr. Stanton frowned at her all the time and looked as black as any fat, florid gentleman could look.

As soon as Madam's guests had departed she went upstairs.

When I was combing out her lovely hair in her living-room Mr. Stanton entered. She gave a quick glance at his angry face and said laconically,—

"I have made your social fortune, my dear."

"You have!—but don't you think you had better see me alone——" he checked himself, frowning.

"No," she said with a weary little sigh. "Phyllis would know what we are going to say any way. All women know what married people say in a quarrel,—but I must refuse to quarrel. I'm just too awfully tired."

"You have aggrieved and insulted the most important woman in the Four Hundred," said Mr. Stanton angrily, "a woman whose social frown or smile means the making or marring of anyone's career."

"Tut, tut," said Madam; "I tell you I have made your social career; besides, I did not insult the person you refer to. I was just a dear, innocent little thing, who never dreamed of any guest of mine wishing to insult me, and I took the lady's rude speech as a nice, kindly bit of persiflage."

"But she knew you meant the insult."

"Yes, just as clearly as she knew that I knew she meant to be rude to you; but I did mine so well, dear."

"I tell you, none of these people will ever notice us again," Mr. Stanton declared hotly.

"And I insist," answered Madam intrepidly, "that we have arrived. We did not get there by running into Mrs. Van Raster's bicycle and sending her flowers and sugared notes after the accident, nor did we attain greatness by the open door of women's clubs and East End charities. My method was simple, direct, and harmonious. I treated a fool according to her folly; in other words, I answered an insolent woman with her own insolence."

"But you can't—"

"But I did, only I won my battle like a lady."

"But you aren't going on insulting all these people!" went on Mr. Stanton desperately.

"Why, if they were all cads like that woman, I wouldn't know them. I couldn't sacrifice myself for your ambition. It is only the men and women who never really belong in good society who are snobs, and, unfortunately, these people often push forward into prominence, like the militia in a military parade."

"Well, you may think, with your Southern blood, that you are always making me feel without saying a word—you may think you can afford to defy these people, even to sneer at them, but I tell you"—and he brought his fist down angrily upon the mantel—"you can't do it. The South's played out. Southern society in New York is sneered at. Southern people are just like other people these days, and they've got to hustle."

Madam smiled. "I think I've hustled a good bit to-night," she answered.

"They've got to stop insulting people."

"Then people have got to stop insulting them," answered Madam.

"They've got to stop talking about who and what they are, and—" Mr. Stanton was in a crimson rage by now, and his wife's face was white.

"It is here," she said, "that one is told so much about—well, not about what they are, but what they have. I tell you"—and her eyes blazed—"I'm sick of hearing that one woman is the richest in New York, that another owns the finest jewels, that still another has a pug

## 102 A Lady, a Mortal, and the Four Hundred

that cost a thousand dollars, and that some other is happy in the possession of two French maids and a manicure woman. I never thought of what people had at home. It was just what they were, nice and kind and hospitable and agreeable. That was all."

"Well," he said, "it's different here, and you can't take the same sort of stand."

"I know it," she answered, "and that is why I took the stand I did to-night, a far different one than my nature or my inheritance of good breeding likes or approves."

Mr. Stanton left her, and then I finished her hair and helped her to bed in silence, for she was not the kind of a lady to abuse her husband behind his back to anyone.

There now, Madam, I hope I'm not tiring you. Very well, if you are interested, I will go on while I rub your head.

Well, as Mrs. Stanton prophesied, her shaft that evening did get them right into the Four Hundred. Society was agog with the story. Of course, the lady with the yellow diamonds withdrew her favor from the Stantons, but every leader of society has a rival in another leader, and this latter leader became bosom friends with Mrs. Stanton at once, and as for the men—well, you know gentlemen do always applaud a plucky woman, although they have very little moral courage themselves.

And how did Mr. Stanton like this, you ask? Oh, he seemed to think it was entirely his own doing. He attributed the beginning of it all to the splendor of his dinner. He was immensely elated. He began to give Madam advice about manners and matters of social diplomacy. That seems to be the trouble with self-made gentlemen. They are so satisfied with making themselves that they want to make everybody else, and Mr. Stanton could not see that his wife was born, not made.

But the fact that she was a lady of quality did burst upon him suddenly in the midst of the season, when Lady Caroline Couper came to visit the lady of the yellow diamond crown. She had no sooner arrived than she informed her hostess that she was going to hunt up a little cousin of hers who had married a New York gentleman named Stanton. The little cousin proved no other than Mrs. John Stanton, and when Lady Couper called and embraced Madam before the eyes of Mr. Stanton and told her how Madam's father and herself had been sweethearts when the former was at Harrow—well, then even Mr. Stanton had to see that he had married one whom he must admit to be a real lady without any worrying over it, and the lady with the yellow diamond crown had to chew the cud of her humiliation and invite the Stantons to dinner.

By this time in the season poor Mrs. Stanton was pale and nervous

to a degree. It is bad enough to be married to one of those big, coarse, energetic, red-faced gentlemen, even when he is not mad about going into society, but when he is, oh, dear me! why it's like spending one's life riding around in full dress in a puffing automobile to the music of a calliope. Mr. Stanton was what one might call a loud gentleman, and one could see that he got on Madam's nerves. Madam grew seedier and seedier.

I suggested to Mr. Stanton that Madam was growing ill, and that perhaps there was too much company.

"Nonsense!" he said. "Why, it's her very life. She'd die without it. It is the one thing she enjoys."

And so I would bite my lips in silence, seeing it was no use protesting, since Mr. Stanton was one of the kind of husbands who had a way of calling his pleasures and ambitions those of his wife. We have many husbands like that in the old country.

When I combed out her long, lovely hair in the evening, often the tears would start in her eyes and she would give a little, nervous sob under her breath.

"Oh Phyllis!" she said one night in a weary, heart-sick way, "I'm so tired of cultivating people."

"But you do not have to," I answered; "they cultivate you."

"Well, it's just the same thing—I do not want to cultivate or be cultivated. In the land where I came from love does not need to be cultivated any more than flowers. They both spring up naturally in warm, soft places."

"I do not want to complain," she added apologetically, "of the people or the life here. The nice people are charming and kind, like the best-bred people the world over. It is just the attitude and atmosphere that I don't like. I don't like making a duty and an ambition of one's social life—scheming, calculating, putting a valuation on friendship and love. I can't get used to the idea that making a social success is like any other business arrangement, or that it is anything to strive for at all."

In May something happened that seemed to undermine Madam's health completely. Mr. Stanton had cut her off from any intercourse with her Southern relatives, and so one day, when I chanced to open the door, I was quite put to it with confusion when a young gentleman stepped inside and announced that he was Madam's cousin Dick and wanted to see Mrs. Stanton at once.

He was a beautiful young gentleman, tall and dark and graceful, like an old portrait. Madam was coming down the stairs as he entered the library, and I heard her give a little, soft cry under her breath, and then she was down before I could catch my thoughts together, and she had her arms around the tall young fellow and



was hugging him and kissing him as though she had been the mother of him.

"Oh Phyllis!" she said, "this is my cousin Dick. This is the way the men look down home," and she stood off from him and eyed him proudly as he bowed and shook my hand.

He had a long paper box under his arm, and he handed it to Madam.

"I'm on my way to the Philippines, Nell," he said, "and I just came by to bring you these. They are some flowers from home."

The room was full of orchids at that moment, but Madam seized the box as if it contained the only real flowers in the world. She sat down on the floor and lifted the lid. It seemed so very silly, perhaps, her crying, you know, but the tears came in a perfect stream down her cheeks as she buried her face in the blossoms and sobbed, "Oh Dick! they didn't cost anything! they didn't cost anything!"

I started to leave, but she called me back. Lifting the blossoms out one by one to show me, "This is a magnolia bud," she said, "from the great trees in the old garden. See, isn't it beautiful? and do you know, Phyllis, dear, it holds the song of the mocking-bird in its heart."

My eyes were wet too. I knew that these flowers were to Madam what a bunch of English buttercups would be to me, and how they would bring back the song of the cuckoo and the glory of an English field.

There were yellow jessamines and white Cape jessamines, and tea-roses and tea-olive. A wild, sweet fragrance filled the room, and Madam said over and over again, laying the treasures against her trembling lips:

"They didn't cost anything! they didn't cost anything!"

"Nothing but love," said the young master; and then I thought it time to leave, since the very mention of the word suggests the departure of one person when three are present; not that I mean to imply that there was then or ever anything serious between Madam and her cousin, at least that I know of.

Madam grew paler and more listless after the young gentleman's visit, but the house was kept going just the same. Mr. Stanton was infatuated with what he called his social success, although he was really playing Bottom to Madam's Titania all the time. Vanity Fair laughed at him, seeing that it was his wife's fairy-like spells that encircled and cast a halo about his own stupid and blatant personality.

He joined the Sons of the Revolution and began to hunt up pedigrees. Like so many people over here whose recent ancestors are unmentionable, he raked up his history many hundred years back, and



found that he was related to somebody who was related to somebody with a title. Then he set some people who are paid to hunt up such things on the track of his progenitors.

One evening, when Madam was feeling particularly seedy and I was preparing her for bed, he burst into the room with a large package, looking like the cook in *Cyrano de Bergerac* with a big pie. It was one of those chilly evenings in early June, and his face was very red from the cold.

"Ah, you are too tired," he said breezily.

"No," answered Madam wearily.

"I just wanted to show you these." He laid his parcel on the dressing-table, opened it, and lifted up some large objects brightly painted and looking a little fresh and sticky.

"What are they?" asked Madam.

"They are my various shields and crests and coats of arms," said Mr. Stanton.

Madam gasped, and really, you must excuse me for smiling, but the poor, vain gentleman had a lot of gaudy mottoes and all the birds and beasts that were in Noah's ark and all the flowers from the woods and fields richly emblazoned upon these pieces of wood, carved in various appropriate shapes, and now, would you think it? I noticed supporters on one of his crests, and these may be used, as you know, only by Knights of the Bath in England.

Madam scrutinized each one of these marvellous conceptions with an irritating smile as Mr. Stanton held them for her inspection.

"What are you going to do with them?" she asked as he laid the last one aside.

"Why, you know, they are the coats of arms of the various branches of my family," said Mr. Stanton, swelling visibly, "and I thought I'd hang them along the hall, like some I saw in an English home."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Madam.

Mr. Stanton looked quite vexed. "It doesn't follow," he said crossly, "that because a fellow's father worked at a trade or because his grandfather didn't—er—come over in the first cabin that one has not had aristocratic ancestors way back in the past."

Madam's face flushed with anger and mortification. "Ah, my dear fellow," she said, "why can't you be simple and unpretentious,—just what you are,—and let all this stuff and nonsense alone."

"It isn't stuff and nonsense. I've got as good a right to be proud of my ancestors as you have—perhaps better, for though you are always letting hints drop about your fine blood, I've never seen anything in the way of data to show for it."

Madam was at a white heat by now. "The reason, perhaps, why you have heard so little is because I was loyal enough and modest

## 106 A Lady, a Mortal, and the Four Hundred

enough not to flaunt any superiority I might have in that direction in your face," she said as she went to a little escritoire in the corner of the room and opened it. She pulled open its little drawers. "The portraits of some of my people are upstairs in the attic," she said, "but here are some miniatures. Here," she said, drawing forth a locket on a blue ribbon, "is one of my first American ancestresses on my mother's side, Lady Mary Houston. She and her young son came over to America with Lord Baltimore's colony. The miniature is one of Malbone's."

Mr. Stanton took it angrily, but his face softened a moment as he saw how very like to his wife's face was this one limned on ivory. She drew out picture after picture, each one of some distinguished person—gentlemen and ladies of title, Revolutionary heroes, fine old Huguenots with stately shoulders and powdered hair. They lay in a heap on the desk, Mr. Stanton examining them one by one surlily. As he laid the last one down, he swaggered towards his pile of painted boards and said to her in an angry, insolent tone:

"Well, my lady, your ancestry wouldn't have counted a damned bit if I hadn't taken you out of your poverty and set you up and made a lady of you."

Madam's face was white and her lips were drawn. Her tiny little nostrils quivered. She walked straight over to her husband, and before he knew what she was about she had gathered that pile of painted boards in her arms and thrown them into the fire.

Mr. Stanton caught her arm. "You common creature," she said, her whole soul in rebellion, "I married you because I was proud of your being just what you were, and I thought you were proud of it too, and now that you are not—why, you have nothing to be proud of at all."

He made her no answer. No man answers a woman when she is as angry as Madam was at that moment. In our country they strike their wives when they are brutes like Mr. Stanton, but you see he was an American, if he was not a real gentleman. He stood there a moment looking sullenly in the fire at his tawdry, painted boards, then turned and left the room.

Soon after this Mrs. Stanton was taken ill. The doctors called it pneumonia, but so many ladies die from the heart, and I know Mrs. Stanton did. People were most kind and loving to her, and she felt it deeply and told me that everything seemed clear and easy, now that she knew that she would not have to bother any more.

But when she lay dying, with a bit of her cousin's jessamine clutched in her tiny white hand, a satirical, satisfied little smile passed across her lips, and she whispered,—

"Phyllis, dear, I'm going where there is no Four Hundred."

# THE REV. PILGREEN'S WOOING

*By Matt Grim*



## I.

THE first time Mr. Silas Pilgreen went over into Deer Creek Valley it was to preach the funeral sermon of Alpheus Jephson. He died early in the winter, when the roads were almost impassable from heavy rains and the days were dark and cold. The preacher who came once a month to minister to the spiritual needs of the Deer Creek Valley people also languished upon a bed of illness miles away over the mountains, so Alpheus was buried with a very short shrift indeed, Mr. Mobley reading and praying by the open grave, and then lending a hand to help the other neighbors shovel in the sodden red clay upon the pine coffin. It was a lowering day, with the wind sweeping down the mountain sides and through the valley, driving sheets of icy mist before it, while others gathered and hung heavy folded in the wake of each gust.

The Widow Jephson shivered and wept as they led her away from the graveyard, and cast yearning glances back at that red mound, marked by unhewn gray stones picked hastily from a pile on the roadside.

"It does 'pear so hard an' lonesome to leave him here by hisself in the cold, wet ground, an' night comin' on too," she sobbed. "He never did wanter die in winter time no how, an' I do think the Almighty could 'a' took him in summer, when it 'ud 'a' been possible to 'a' had a funeral. He deserves the best sermon any preacher can make."

But winter storms raged high and spring came late that year, and first one thing and then another interfered until summer lay hot upon the land. Then news of Mr. Silas Pilgreen's eloquence penetrated to Deer Creek Valley. He belonged to another settlement entirely, but it was arranged that he should come over in the place of the minister in charge and preach the funeral sermon.

Mr. Silas Pilgreen possessed an exalted sense of his duty towards man, as well as the gift of ready speech. His heart yearned over the sinner, and his youthful enthusiasm, tempered by a certain dignified gravity, rarely flagged. Fierce as a roaring lion in his denunciations of evil, he could be tender as the voice of a dove when leading the wrong-

doer from his crooked ways. People trembled with fear or melted to tears under the power of his eloquence, and the vibrations of spiritual awakening were felt in communities remote from his own.

But with it all he had very little more book-learning than the people to whom he preached. He was simply an unlettered genius fired by the example of Biblical characters, and especially the career of Christ. Educated and placed in the world, he would still have been a leader to his fellows. Imagination, personal magnetism, and, above all, that exalted idea of love in its impersonal quality, would have given him force anywhere.

The external man harmonized very well with his calling. He was tall and smooth-faced, with long, black hair and beaming, kindly eyes. There had been some attempt at clerical fashion in his homely country attire and in the way he brushed his hair, but his brown hands showed honest contact with the plough-handles and other implements of the farm, for his parishioners couldn't do more than contribute slightly to his income. However, in the field, in the blacksmith shop, or wherever he might happen to find a listener, Mr. Silas Pilgreen lost no opportunity of voicing what he firmly believed to be the truth, and his sermons were first preached to himself while he split rails, or chopped wood, or went about other daily toil equally heavy.

"I'm glad I ain't got to work with my head to get a livin'. You can plough an' you can hoe or you can do purty much anything else in the field without havin' to think about it. Yes, I'm glad the Almighty give me a little piece o' land an' the strength to work it."

He was feeling particularly cheerful and thankful that Saturday afternoon when he rode over into Deer Creek Valley. His crops promised a good harvest, and there were indications of a wide-spread religious revival in his part of the country. He divided his time between singing hymns in a low-pitched voice and refreshing his memory on certain passages of Scripture.

It was natural and proper that he should "put up" at the Jephsons'. They were expecting him, and old Mr. Jephson and his wife sat on the piazza when he rode up. They made him welcome in hearty fashion, Mr. Jephson leading the horse away to the stable, and Mrs. Jephson bustling about to get him a chair

"A master hot summer," she remarked to make conversation.

"Yes, it's been purty warm, but we ain't no call to grumble."

"No, I s'pose not. Wouldn't you like a drink o' water?"

"I don't know but I would, if it ain't too much trouble."

"Tennessee!"

"Yes'm."

"Fetch Mr. Pilgreen a fresh gourd o' water."

A shy, awkward-looking young woman came through the entry in

a few minutes with the desired refreshment. Bands of dun-colored hair framed a meek, freckled face, and she kept one hand twisted in the folds of her dress while she stood before the preacher.

"This is our Tennessee, Mr. Pilgreen, but Georgy ain't at home. We never had but two daughters, an' their pa 'lowed they oughter be named for our States. I'm from Tennessee—an' she's the youngest, for I let Mr. Jephson have first choice."

"I mistrust you're a mighty good wife, Mis' Jephson."

"Well, I try to be, Mr. Pilgreen, holdin' it a part o' my Christian duty."

"So it is, Mis' Jephson."

"You ain't never been married?"

"No'm," he said, blushing slightly, a change of color reflected in the countenance of Tennessee, who still lingered with the empty gourd in her hand, listening to the conversation.

"That 'pears a little strange, seein' that preachers do get married about the first thing."

"Maybe Mr. Pilgreen ain't found nobody he likes, ma," said Tennessee in an agony of embarrassment.

"La! I see plenty," he declared.

"Then you're too bashful to court 'em," Mrs. Jephson put in with a laugh. "Now, I wouldn't be. You'd find 'em willin' enough."

"Why, ma!" protested Tennessee.

"It's so. Girls put on airs an' make out like they think themselves too good for anybody, but they're to be had for the askin' easy enough, an' a likely young preacher might take his choice."

Tennessee retired in modest confusion, but as she went out she heard her mother ask the preacher his age and heard him say that he was thirty.

During the afternoon Mr. Pilgreen heard all about Alpheus, and made notes in memory for his discourse. The old people dwelt tenderly on the memory of their son, recalling all his childish exploits as well as the acts of his later life. He had been a good citizen and a consistent church member, as they declared that all the neighbors could testify.

"Nobody could speak more truly 'bout that than Meely, but she had to go to market to-day, an' she 'lowed we could tell you all better'n she could."

"Is she the widow?"

"Yes, an' a smart woman," said the old man warmly. "We 'lowed she'd better bring the children an' come here to live after Alph. died, but she wouldn't. She 'lowed she'd get along, an' it 'ud be better for the boys to know they'd got to work for her when they grow up. She was turrible heart-broke when Alpheus died. It didn't pear like nothin' 'ud do her any good. She lives over there on the hill."



Mr. Pilgreen had passed the little cabin and had observed its clean-swept yard and embowering fruit-trees. The old woman bent to her knitting with tightening lips while the two men talked. The daughter-in-law had never been an enthusiasm with her.

"Meely does keep a nice house," she admitted when her husband appealed to her, but that was all she said.

That night after Mr. Pilgreen retired he heard the bustle of a new arrival. The boards between his room and the one next to it were very thin, and presently he heard Georgia and Tennessee talking.

"What made you so late, anyhow?"

"It was all Meely's fault. She was bent on seein' ever'thing in town, an' then she bought herself a new spotted muslin, an'——"

"A'ready?"

"Well, it was a black ground with white polka dots, an' then she 'lowed she needed a new bonnet, an' got one with one o' them short flarin' tails ruffled all around."

"She is makin' a spread."

"She's thinkin' about marryin' again, Tennessee Jephson,—that's what."

"Well, don't tell ma, for she's set against Meely anyway."

"I don't care. I think she'd better wait till Alph.'s funeral's been preached 'fore settin' her cap for another man. Women that's had one husband oughter be satisfied."

A tremulous sigh was wafted through the frail partition, and the preacher was conscious of a feeling of pity for the meek, homely Tennessee. He heard his own name mentioned, and turned over in order not to be tempted to listen any more.

He preceded his entertainers to church next morning, desiring a quiet season of meditation before the beginning of the services. The high unpainted pulpit concealed him from the curious gaze of early worshippers straying in. He heard the rustling and whispering of gathering crowds. When he rose to give out the first hymn the house was crowded, and even the doors and windows were darkened by intruding heads. He was used to the battery of stranger eyes, and his gaze wandered calmly over the sea of faces until it was arrested by the blue eyes of the Widow Jephson. The mourning family all occupied the front bench, and she sat directly before him with her children, two small boys. Her whole personality impressed him as wonderfully distinct and individual. Her black calico gown settled about her with a fluffy airiness unlike the other women's, and her round, pensive face shone out of the ruffled sunbonnet with bewitching charm. How Mr. Pilgreen knew that her eyes were so blue and her hair the color of corn-silk he could not have explained. He felt a momentary confusion, and also a pity for the departed Alpheus he had not before experienced.



Think of having to leave a woman like that to embrace the cold shadow of death!

The next instant his conscience had overtaken him, and he was appalled by the wickedness of such thoughts. Was he not there to preach a funeral discourse, to comfort the hearts of those sorrowing people, and to give the sinner a warning? He lined out the hymn in a stern, loud voice.

But it was no use; the mischief had been done. He preached with fervid earnestness, and not only the Jephsons but half the congregation had melted to tears before he finished; but he was conscious only of one woman's tears, he heard only her sobs. When her face was hidden in the folds of a black-bordered cotton handkerchief, his voice softened and grew husky; when her wet eyes were lifted to his, a sense of power streamed down to his very finger-tips. He was preaching to and for her, and almost lost sight of Alpheus as an individual soul. He had simply been her husband; his taking away had left her heart widowed if not broken.

"I must say it was the powerfulest funeral sermon I ever heard," Mr. Mobley frankly declared when the service was over; "an' I don't except Uncle Jesse Davis either, an' I useter think he could beat the world on them kind o' sermons."

"I didn't know Alph. Jephson was such a good man," mused a simple, conscience-stricken woman.

"Well, you see, it took the preacher to bring out his good p'int," said a neighbor, overhearing her. "A body has to be dead an' gone, it 'pears to me, 'fore they're known. We 'lowed Alph. was no better'n other men, an' now we find out he was mighty nigh a saint. It does beat all, the way fo'ks are misunderstood in this world. I'm right glad the Almighty ain't as blind as we are. An' what do you think o' Meely?" her voice suddenly dropped to a whisper.

"That she's bearin' up mighty well."

"Bearin' up! Well, I'd say so. Look at that bonnet now."

"It's all black, ain't it?"

"Yes, but there ain't a mite o' *mournin'* about it. You can't mourn in ruffles an' silk ribbin, if they are black. It ain't every woman that can have such a good husband, an' you'd think she'd still be a-weepin' her eyes out."

"But Meely's right young, an' it ain't natural for young fo'ks to go a-grievin' all their days."

"Well, she needn't to 'a' wore such a bonnet as that, anyhow. Look at them Jephson girls; they ain't nothin' beside her."

That was what Mr. Silas Pilgreen thought too as he walked home with the family. Meely had spoken to him before leaving the church, slipping softly to his side, her eyes still wet with tears.

## The Rev. Pilgreen's Wooing

"I'm so much obliged to you," she said quiveringly. "Nothin' more feelin' could 'a' been said, an' it just suited what I always thought o' Alph."

The preacher blushed and stammered, suffocated by an emotion to which he had been an utter stranger heretofore. The little boys were clinging shyly to her skirts, and he patted the one nearest to him on the head.

Meely and her children dined at her father-in-law's that day, and Mr. Pilgreen might have been consuming dust and ashes for all thought he took of the meal. It was his mission to cheer and console the family, and he talked gravely of the life to come, and the world where all would some day meet with the surety of remaining together. He talked to all the family, and yet his eyes sought Meely's again and again. Now and then he was conscious that Tennessee watched him furtively and listened so absorbingly that she forgot her dinner. But it was only a vague consciousness, and passed unheeded.

The hours of the afternoon passed in a sort of dream to him, and he was tempted to accept the warm invitation of the old people to spend another night with them. In his secret soul he reflected that if he did he might have opportunity to speak more with the widow. But he had walked too long in a straight path of duty to swerve so easily. He knew that the old aunt who kept house for him would be alarmed if he failed to return that evening. He had been so strict in keeping his word with her, even in such small matters, that she would think only a serious mishap could make him break it. He went out to the lot with old Mr. Jephson to saddle the horse. When he came back to make his adieus, Meely stood at the gate with her bonnet on.

"You ain't goin'?" exclaimed her father-in-law.

"Yes, I must see to things. The calf ain't been watered to-day, an' the chickens must be fed."

"Come back an' stay all night."

"No, it won't do no good, pa."

"But I 'lowed it 'ud be such a lonesome day for you, Meely, seein' as it's all been fetched back to you so plain."

"Every day is lonesome," she said with a sigh that went straight to the heart of Mr. Pilgreen. Her blue eyes were looking mournfully into his, but for the life of him he could not utter a word. He hurried in to say good-by to the women.

"I hope this ain't goin' to be the last time you come to see us, Mr. Pilgreen."

"I hope not, Mis' Jephson."

"An' maybe you'll find a wife over here in our valley."

"La, ma!" exclaimed Georgia.

"Well, preachers oughter be married."

"An' I think so too," he said, and beat a flurried retreat. Meely still lingered at the gate, talking to the old man.

"She's doin' it a-purpose to get him to walk home with her," Georgia whispered to her sister. "There, he's hangin' the bridle on his arm. I told you so."

Tennessee stared wistfully.

"Maybe he can't help likin' her."

"She oughter be ashamed o' herself,—but I knowed what that bonnet meant when I saw her a-gettin' it."

Meanwhile Mr. Pilgreen walked along with Meely, dumb with blissful confusion. He tried to think of something to say to draw her mind away from the past, but nothing more original than the weather suggested itself to his thoughts.

"It's been a fine summer for raisin' young ducks an' things," he stammered as they met a procession of those short-legged creatures waddling and gabbling up the lane.

"More'n common?" she questioned in a tone of surprise.

"Well, I don't know; maybe not. My Aunt Melindy, she keeps house for me,—an' a mighty peaceable, good woman she is too,—she 'lowed t'other day she had never seen fowls turn out better."

"I've been so busy helpin' in the fields an' goin' to market, I ain't had much time to notice how things was goin' 'bout the house. I leave the boys to tend to them things. They take after their pa, an' he always liked to have plenty o' chickens for eatin' an' ducks an' geese for feathers."

Her plump bosom heaved in a gentle sigh.

"It must be a sight o' help when a man takes interest in them things."

"It is."

"I always like to tend about the house myself, an' help Aunt Melindy."

He trembled and blushed over the significance of the speech, especially as Meely gave him a soft glance around the sombre brim of her bonnet.

"Ain't this a purty sight down the valley?" she remarked, pausing to lean against the fence, where she could overlook the top rail.

"It's one o' the Almighty's pictures, made for His creatures. We can see 'em every day an' all day. I 'low sometimes there ain't nothin' to beat the mornin' when it's just comin' in streaks o' red, an' the mornin' star trembles like it was afraid o' bein' put out by the bigger light, or when the sun's a-risin' an' all the world is a-glitterin' an' shinin' with dew."

"I useter like the nights better, when the moon was a-shinin' an' the crickets an' July flies a-singin' in the grass, but that was when me

an' Alph. sat out under the trees a-courtin', an' I hadn't a thought o' trouble."

Her sighs and soft, trembling tones wrung Mr. Pilgreen's heart. He edged a little closer to her.

"It must be powerful lonesome for you now."

"It is; so lonesome!" and now her eyes looked straight into his, shining, limpid as a child's, through tears.

Mr. Pilgreen was lifted almost out of his shoes.

"There ain't nothin' to do but to trust in the Almighty," he gasped, then felt somehow that he had not, after all, said the right thing.

"Little more an' I'd 'a' took right holt o' her then an' there," he mused excitedly to himself as he rode homeward. When his thoughts gave him time to observe once more external things, he was surprised to find that the face of nature itself had changed to him, had taken on a newer, subtler beauty. His conscience smote him that it should be so; it seemed a disloyalty to his love of the spiritual that an earthly love could fasten upon him with such power. Life thrilled to all its infinite depths, and where he had once been stirred only by religious zeal he was now possessed by the love of a woman. Really the two so intermingled—the human and the divine—he could not distinguish between them.

Mrs. Melinda Pilgreen sat in the door-way, smoking her pipe, that evening when he reached home.

"You're a little late, ain't you, Silas?" she called eagerly when he dismounted from his horse at the gate.

"You didn't give me up, Aunt Melindy, did you?"

"Oh, no; I knowed you'd come if you said so."

She had his supper on the table when he came in, and sat down on the opposite side to hear all the news. She was a fat, homely old woman, with not a tooth left in her mouth, and only a scanty remnant of hair on her head. He thought of another form and face in that seat opposite him, and then started guiltily as his aunt spoke to him.

"You don't 'pear to be eatin' much, Silas. Are you sick?"

"No'm."

"Them cold greens are good. I b'iled 'em a-purpose for you."

"I ain't somehow hungry," he replied, pushing back his plate.

"So you like the fo'ks over in Deer Creek Valley? Did many come out to hear you?"

"The house was packed," he replied with modest pride. But even then, and nearly all the time he talked to her, he blinked at the flame of the candle and seemed abstracted.

"Aunt Melindy, how long ought a widder to wait 'fore she marries again?" he asked after a moment's deep thought.

"Good gracious, Silas, what are you talkin' about? I don't see as they oughter ever marry again."

"But many times they do."

"I know it, an' 'fore their first husbands is cold in their graves; but it ain't right, no it ain't."

"We ain't got no Scripture authority for thinkin' it's sinful for 'em to marry again, Aunt Melindy."

"I don't say as we have, Silas, but let 'em wait an' mourn for the loss o' one husband 'fore they're castin' sheep's-eyes about for another. A year is little enough time. That widder over in Deer Creek Valley ain't a-thinkin' o' marryin' again a'ready, is she?"

"Not that I know, Aunt Melindy," he replied quite steadily, but turning guiltily away from her eyes. He rose from the table, went out into the yard, and leaned upon the gate. His pulses throbbed; through all his troubled soul he felt the splendid beauty of the night. The bewitchment enthralling him still cast its influence upon everything else. He longed to have Meely's warm hand in his, to feel her breathing presence at his side.

"That's what she meant when she 'lowed she liked moonlight and night the best. It's made for such thoughts and feelin's," he mused, watching the silvered radiance of the yet unseen moon, as it spread upward over the eastern sky. The fragrance of dew-wet flowers penetrating the soundless dusk entranced his senses, folding him in a dream. But the moon was following the wake of her heralding lights, and presently a clear level beam shone straight into his eyes. He woke with a start and a sigh, the restless doubt underlying and embittering his new joy rising to the surface again.

Had he only yielded to a subtle temptation of the devil in loving this woman?

"If I'd seen her first anywhere else 'ceptin' while I was standin' in the pulpit, an' there to preach her husband's funeral too," he groaned in spirit. "But the Lord knows I couldn't help it," he continued self-excusingly. "I hadn't a thought o' fallin' into a trap; I hadn't a thought o' anything but doin' my duty when I got up there an' saw her. Well, I'll not say a word; I'll not let on what my feelin's are till the year o' her mournin' is over. Then, the Lord willin', I'll ask her to be my wife."

Mr. Pilgreen adhered firmly to that resolution, although he could not resist the temptation of occasionally riding over into Deer Creek Valley to see the Jephsons, and he also assisted at the "big meetin'." But never a word did he speak to Meely that he might not have addressed to any other woman. It finally went abroad in the valley that he was courting Tennessee Jephson.

"It does beat all, the taste some men fo'ks has," said Mrs. Mobley in a tone of disgust. "Our Ca'line is a sight smarter an' better-lookin' than Tennessee Jephson, an'——"

"But we're to have one Silas in the family, Susan, an' I don't know as we'll want another if he is a preacher," Mr. Mobley replied; then he lowered his tone and wagged his head wisely as he continued,—

"It's my belief it ain't Tennessee at all."

"Who is it, then?"

"The widder."

"Meely?"

"Yes."

"Why, he never looks at her. Mr. Mobley, you certainly are losin' your mind."

"No, I ain't, honey. He don't say nothin' to her, but I've seen looks—well, the sort o' looks I useter give you on the sly——"

"It's Tennessee, I tell you, sure as you live."

But the gossips waited in vain for further developments. The "big meetin'" closed, and Mr. Pilgreen returned home, still biding his time in patience. Only his aunt detected the change love had made in him.

"He ain't said nothin' to me about it, but sure as you live I know the thought o' some woman's got holt o' him," she said to Miss Emmeline Head, her neighbor and confidante.

"It ain't acted on his preachin'."

"But it does on his thinkin'. He's been the most single-hearted creetur in doin' the Lord's work I ever knowed in my life till now. He's had nothin' else on his mind but savin' sinners, readin' the Bible, an' prayin'."

"Gracious me! he ain't give up doin' them things, has he?"

"Oh, no; but he's took to sittin' with the Bible on his knee, while his thoughts are a-wanderin', an' when I speak to him unexpectedly he turns red an' looks bashful as a girl. Then he's always hangin' on the gate in the evenin', gazin' at the moon; an' t'other day I found some poetry he'd cut out of the newspaper in his hymn-book."

"An' they war'n't Scripture verses?"

"No, they war'n't Scripture verses; they was all about some woman with red hair an' blue eyes. I want Silas to marry, but I'd hate mighty bad for him to get a red-headed woman. She'd be sure to walk over him."

"Why don't you get him to tell you 'bout it?"

"I have tried to lead up to it in ways unbeknownst to him, but he always was close-mouthed about his feelin's."

It was corn-gathering time, and Mr. Silas Pilgreen was at work in an upland field joining the public highway, one morning, when Mr. Mobley rode up to the fence and hailed him.



"Fine weather for work, ain't it?" he said genially when the preacher came nearer. "I 'lowed to stay at home to-day an' help the children gether our crop, but Mis' Mobley wanted some things from the store; an' then I took a notion I'd ride over here to see my old friend Eli Carlyle, an' 'specially as I could do some o' my neighbors a good turn too."

"How are the fo'ks over your way?" the other inquired, thinking of only one of them.

"Doin' purty well. Why ain't you been over lately?"

"I've been that busy I couldn't. I 'low to come as soon as I get through with this."

"You're wanted to-morrow night."

"What for?"

"To marry Meely Jephson."

For an instant Mr. Pilgreen's face was flooded with color, driven there by the wild, too joyful, thought that she understood and intended to end his self-imposed probation. Widows could do that, couldn't they? But the next moment the crushing truth was borne in upon him.

"Marry—marry her?" he stammered.

"Yes, to Billy Sawyer."

"But it ain't been a year since her husband died."

"Lord, that don't make no difference. Gettin' married is a sight easier to them that's been through it once than to others. It's surprisin' to me that she ain't been snapped up 'fore this time. She always was a likely, peart girl, an' could 'a' took her pick an' choice 'fore she married Alph. Jephson. I know one o' my boys courted her, an' I don't know but he's been doin' it again. If you ever take a notion to a widder, Mr. Pilgreen, don't sit round waitin' for her to forget her first husband. It's right nice to have such feelin's, but somebody else'll get the widder."

"I reckon that's so, Mr. Mobley."

"You'll marry 'em, will you?"

He wrestled with himself for a moment, being powerfully tempted to say that he could not on account of another appointment; but the lie stuck in his throat, and he finally said, "Yes, I'll be there."

After Mr. Mobley rode away, he sat down on an old stump to get his breath and try to piece his scattered wits together again. The blow had been terrific. He hardly realized to what he had pledged himself in promising to go and marry her to another man. Mr. Mobley had declared that she specially desired it. For what purpose? he wondered. He was too charitable to suppose that she desired to punish him. He groaned and went down on his knees there in the silent open field, and prayed when he thought of the trial before him.

And he did meet it with a dignity and courage quite touching to one witness at least, for Mr. Mobley still clung to his belief that he had penetrated the preacher's secret.

"It did 'pear hard to see him a-standin' up there givin' her away to another man," he remarked to Mrs. Mobley as they walked home.

"Why, ain't you give up that idee yet? I didn't see nothin' strange about it. He 'peared to be enjoyin' hisself very well—preachers ain't expected to be gay as other fo'ks—an' he certainly talked to Tennessee the whole endurin' evenin'."

"That was to hide his feelin's, Mis' Mobley."

Perhaps she would not have sniffed so sceptically could she have seen Mr. Pilgreen as he rode home that night. The Jephsons urged him to be their guest, but he preferred the lonely road home over the mountains. The enemy had grappled with him again, and in a form so new and strange and fearful that he thought all hell must be turned loose upon the night. He felt that he had resigned himself to the situation until he saw Meely with that other man who had won her, and who looked so exultantly on his prize and so pityingly on the rest of the world. Then he was seized with an awful desire to take him by the throat and wring out his miserable, puny life. Think of his presumption in taking her hand, in kissing her, even, before all those people, while she blushed and laughed and played with the lavender ribbons streaming from her white dress. The remembrance of the scene made the preacher clench his hands and groan, tormented with such pangs of jealousy as he had not conceived of in human experience. The savage instincts still underlying civilization and Christianity were arrayed against his soul. Afterwards he declared that he met Satan face to face that night on the mountains, and wrestled with him, as Jacob did with the angel, till break of day.

"One time the pit o' hell opened an' he came purty nigh throwin' me in, but I held on to the thought o' the Almighty with both hands, an' I kept a-cryin' out loud for salvation to come, that I knowed nothin' in the world or the flesh could equal the reward o' the hereafter; an' then all at once I found myself lyin' on the ground that weak I could hardly lift a finger, but saved,—yes, surely saved,—an' there stood my old horse nibblin' grass on the side o' the road, an' way over the mountains I seen day a-comin'."

## II.

"AIN'T you been mistook in 'lowin' Silas was thinkin' o' some woman, Mis' Pilgreen?" Miss Emmeline Head suddenly inquired one day, when the two were having one of their confidential visits.

"I'm beginnin' to think I was," she admitted, "but he ain't been just the same."

"He's improvin' in preachin' every day."

"Yes, he is, an' a patienter, lovin'er bein' you never lived with. I have heard in a roundabout way that he was courtin' a girl over in Deer Creek Valley, but I can't think o' any woman not bein' glad to get him. He's goin' over there next Sunday to preach another funeral."

"Whose?"

"Why, it's Meely Hightower's second husband. She married a Jephson first time. I knowed some o' her fo'ks when I was a girl, an' if she's a bit like 'em she'll marry a dozen times if she gets the chance. One o' her aunts had five husbands."

"Think o' that! An' some women don't have none," mused Miss Emmeline.

"I ain't never said nothin' 'bout the Hightowers to Silas. He ain't one to take intrust in such things. He 'lows it's gossipin' 'bout our neighbors, an' it ain't accordin' to the Scripture idee o' brotherly love, but I say it does some fo'ks good to be talked about; it makes 'em behave better'n if their neighbors didn't say nothin'. Meely Hightower's husband—the second 'un, mind you—ain't been dead but three months, but I lay she'll be gettin' another 'fore the year's out."

Mr. Pilgreen had heard the account of Meely's second widowhood with complex emotions. Mr. Mobley brought the news in one of his visits.

"An' she'll be sendin' for you to preach the funeral too; mind what I say."

"Oh, I reckon not," stammered the preacher, looking down.

"Yes, she will, an' it's about time you was comin' over anyway. You ain't been since you married Silas Bates an' our Sary. You'll be a-marryin' Meely next."

"You don't think she'd take a third husband?"

"I do. She don't look a day older than she did 'fore she married this last time, an' I don't see no reason why a young woman should go sorrowin' all her days because she's had bad luck in bein' left a widow twice."

In the weeks following this conversation the preacher persuaded himself that his speculations regarding Meely's future were wholly impersonal. He had met her only two or three times during the two years of her second marriage, and then he had turned away as quickly as possible, feeling it a temptation to even look at her. But now he could think, he could look to the full desire of his heart, without a smitten conscience. He flattered himself that he no longer cared, and nourished his sympathy for her over the death of her husband, and wondered if a woman's grief could be as poignant for the loss of a second love as for a first, or if it diminished in proportion to the number of experiences. He felt very serene and sure of himself when he started over into Deer Creek Valley to obey the third call Meely had

made upon him. But alas for the uncertainty of human nature! No sooner did his gaze rest upon her, and he noted her widow's attire and the pensive droop of her eyelids, than all the old passionate desire for her overcame him again, and the flame of his love burned high and bright. When she gave him her hand and said,—

"You're good to come when a body's in trouble," he fervently replied,—

"I'd come to you any time."

"Little did I think two years ago it 'ud be like this, Mr. Pilgreen," and she wiped a tear from the corner of her eye.

"Death is a mighty sad thing, Mis'—er—Sawyer, an' comes to us when we least expect it."

"That's what Billy always 'lowed, an' I know he wouldn't be the one to want me to grieve over him."

Then she brightened and talked of some of the changes in the valley during those two years. There were not many, although the valley had passed through an agitated struggle with the Woman's Rights question. There had been a few marriages, among them Georgia Jephson's, but Tennessee still remained at home. With all his prejudices against gossip, Mr. Pilgreen listened and laughed with her when Meely told him some of the stories growing out of the Woman's Rights question, especially the story of the Mobleys. Away from the charm of her presence, he felt a little uneasy over it as unbecoming one of his sacred calling, but by Sunday afternoon he had made up his mind not to leave the valley until he had asked her to be his wife. He remembered what Mr. Mobley had said once about widows, and he did not intend to risk a delay again. Her husband had been dead three months, and he would give her twelve more to honor his memory if she wished, but she must give him her promise. He felt justified in hoping too, for did she not turn to him in every important crisis of her life? And what meant that soft and friendly beam of her eyes, if not encouragement?

"May I see you home, Mis' Sawyer?" he asked after the service Sunday afternoon.

"If I ain't takin' you outer your way."

"No, I'm goin' home, an' that's the nighest way."

She sent the children on ahead, an act of discretion which set the preacher's heart to thumping audibly.

"Maybe you don't recollect that I walked with you once before?" he said, confused but happy.

"Oh, yes, I do," she murmured.

"Deer Creek Valley's a purty place to live," he remarked next.

"Yes," she assented, absently plucking a leaf from an overhanging bough.

"I s'pose you'd never think o' goin' anywhere else."

"La, I do go."

"To live, I mean."

"Oh!"

"Have you ever been over in our settlement?"

"No."

"I wish you'd come to see Aunt Melindy some time, an'—an'——"

At this point courage and ideas deserted him for a moment. Then one of the boys appeared in sight,—“an' bring the children.”

She laughed.

"They'd run you plum crazy in a day."

"No, they wouldn't. I'd like to have 'em with me all the time."

His voice quavered and broke; he turned his earnest eyes appealingly upon her. "Meely, can't you an' the boys come? Can't I have you all the time?"

She had thriftily raised the hem of her black gown out of the soft, deep dust of the road, but she let it fall again and stopped.

"Mr. Pilgreen!"

"Yes, I know it's suddint. I know you ain't had time to get over his loss, an' I'm not askin' you to marry me all at once. I'll wait long as you want me to, a year if you say so, but bein' as I 'lowed to ask you before, an' didn't get the chance 'cause I waited so long, it 'peared to me I ought to speak this time 'fore it was too late. Honey, there ain't no tellin' how much I love you, an' I'll treat the boys same as they were mine."

Her answer seemed long in coming, so long that suspense would not let him wait. He pressed closer to her, tried to take her hand and look into her face, emboldened and urged onward by the intensity of his feelings.

"Meely, Meely, you ain't mad with me?"

"No, oh, no, but I'm mighty sorry, Mr. Pilgreen, I'm sure. I'm promised."

"Promised, Meely?—promised not to marry any more?"

"No, I'm promised already to marry Eli Mobley. He—he asked me last Sunday."

When Mr. Pilgreen rode by the Jephsons' that afternoon on his way home, he looked neither to the right nor to the left, so he missed seeing Tennessee's pale freckled face at the small front window. But she watched him until he passed out of sight, then laid her head down upon the window-sill, weeping softly.

"I could 'a' told him how it 'ud be. I knowed long ago—long ago. She loves 'em all. I—I love only him. Why couldn't it 'a' been so he'd 'a' loved me? Why couldn't it?"

# BRIDGING THE DEPTHS

*By Percie W. Hart*



ONE may have been quite a sea-traveller and never have happened upon a certain most important type of nautical craft. She is a steamer with something of a hybrid appearance, having the paint and boats of a warship or yacht, the model of a small liner, together with a certain air of trampish recklessness in her movements. In addition to all this, her decks appear to be unduly crowded with machinery of many sorts, her bulwarks are adorned with huge funnel-shaped objects, and she has odd arrangements like big pulley-wheels projecting from bow and stern. Such a craft is what is technically known as a "cable-laying and repair shop,"—in other words, a lineman of the ocean.

At the present time there are about forty-two such specially constructed and equipped vessels employed in laying and caring for the telegraphic cables of the world. That this number must be considerably augmented by the recent colonial acquisitions of the United States can be thoroughly appreciated when the necessity of prompt communication between all parts of a governed territory is considered. Until very recently the United States has had no outlying dependencies or territories (save Alaska), and, consequently, no particular urgency for cables or cable-ships. With the new era now dawning, however, this condition of affairs must be changed, and already some of the improvised transports have been, and are being, used or adapted for the functions of cable repairing, to supply the pressing needs until special craft can be acquired or constructed.

The cables of the world aggregate about one hundred and eighty thousand nautical miles. While the bulk of this is the property of private companies, something in the neighborhood of twenty thousand miles is owned or actively controlled by the different colonial powers. The British Empire and France have about five and eight thousand miles respectively, Germany two thousand, and Italy one thousand. Spain was credited with seventeen hundred miles, but a considerable proportion of this must now appertain to the United States.

The laying of a cable across an ocean is not nearly so simple a matter as might appear at first thought. There are a number of things to be taken into account. The enormous weight of any considerable



length of cable (say, for instance, sufficient to reach from Hawaii to an island of the Ladrões, or what would be only one division in a direct cable between the United States and the Philippines) is an important factor. The Great Eastern was able to carry enough for the whole distance between Valentia, Ireland, and Heart's Content, Newfoundland, and successfully laid it after two attempts. But this is not so great a distance as our illustration, and, moreover, modern cables differ from their predecessors in being made much heavier and in varied types to meet certain conditions. What is known as "deep-sea cable" weighs about two tons to the mile, while the inshore variety weighs fourteen tons to the mile. There are other intermediate grades. Instead of using monstrous vessels, it has been found expedient to lay long-distance cables in sections.

So that we may properly appreciate the subject, let us imagine ourselves on board of a typical cable-ship engaged in actual work.

We find a first-class vessel in all respects, with uniformed officers and crew, strict discipline maintained, and every other feature of expert navigation. In addition to all this, we can quickly note the unique attributes specially suited for her distinctive field of effort. To begin at the very mainspring of the whole, we find the cable coiled away in big iron tanks, situated in what would be the hold of a cargo ship. These tanks are from thirty to forty feet in diameter, and are connected with one another by "ways," or "troughs," through which transfers can readily be made when occasion requires. The numerous machines upon deck are necessary for the proper handling of the heavy cargo, and their power can better be appreciated later. The big, funnel-like objects lining the bulwarks in places are buoys, useful in marking locations. We soon discover that the ship has really three crews or departments, each with its separate chiefs and officers. Nevertheless, they must all work in harmony, one with another, or things will go wrong. There is the steamship crew,—captain, engineers, mates, quartermasters, stokers, deck-hands, cooks, and stewards,—but even these men must be experienced in the special difficulties of navigation and labor with which they have to contend. Then there is a certain corps who have to do with the actual cable laying, picking up, buoying, etc., although, quite naturally, they are aided by the rest as occasion demands. Last of all on our list (but certainly not in importance) are the electricians, charged with the testing and calculating, which must go on continuously while the ship is at work in order to prevent costly mistakes.

Our ship has already laid some sections of cable from either shore, and is now on her way with a fresh cargo to supply the gap between. Out in mid-ocean, hundreds of miles from land and perhaps a thousand miles apart, are two groups of buoys. These designate the sub-

merged ends of the long wire ropes. Our first destination is the nearer of the two. Expert action must commence at once. No ordinary navigating calculations will be economical enough to quickly discover those tiny specks in the great expanse of water. A trifling variation in the chronometers, for instance, might set the ship to a week or ten days of tiresome cruising. Ordinary navigation is intended for ordinary needs, most certainly not to discover pin-points in a blanket. In addition, then, to the usual calculations and instruments, observations are taken from certain stars and the moon, if possible; and as the suspected neighborhood draws near the deep-sea lead is kept going, bringing up specimens of the bottom, and at the same time recording known depths. And, of course, the lookouts are as keen as naval jackies when on watch for a coming enemy. As in most other pursuits, the specialist becomes an adept in his chosen line. The navigating captains of these cable craft very often steam away over the wilderness of ocean and stop in sight of their buoys with all the precision of a man halting at a well-known street-crossing.

And so, after days or weeks or months, as the case may be, of ordinary sea-voyaging, we sight our quarry, and the whole ship's company takes on a bustle and air of preparation for what is to come. No man who loves his ease should adopt the profession of cable-laying. It is the hardest of work, and must be performed under all kinds of trying and disadvantageous circumstances. One need only to have witnessed a boat's crew, clad in glistening oilskins and clumsy life-belts, their frail craft leaping and throwing herself about like a mad thing in the running seas, striving to attach hoisting tackles to the huge and slippery-wet marking buoys, in order to appreciate a single phase of this many-sided subject. Sometimes it seems well-nigh impossible for them to succeed, but, watching their chance, a couple of the men will actually jump for the uncertain object, and, once securing a foothold, crawl about upon its projecting ring-bolts and ledges like veritable simians. Down in the cable-tanks aboardship, also, clearing the line as it pays out through the troughs connecting with the deck machinery above, alert and oftentimes both hard and hazardous labor is unceasingly required. All ropes, even such ones as heavily wired cables, are liable to suddenly kink or tangle in uncoiling. This would, of course, be a special catastrophe in cable-laying, involving not only liability to parting the line, tearing machines to pieces, and costly delay in the work, but also a probable killing or maiming of the exposed toilers about the deck. But we must leave further consideration of the possibilities in the way of danger and difficulty which this combination of enormous weight-handling, intricate machinery, and sea-dangers has brought forth.

A little distance off our quarter we can see the big buoys, tossed

about like corks by the boisterous waves. But something has gone wrong. These are only the "markers." The main buoy, the one to which the cable-end had been actually attached, is missing.

"Swept away in a storm, most likely," a good-natured officer observes for our benefit. "That's why we always put out 'markers.' Some of them are bound to hold."

It now becomes necessary to rake over the bottom of the ocean and recover the sunken end. In such great depths of water this is no slight task, but our veteran cable-crew make nothing of it. Unless the weather conditions are specially unfavorable (and what seems like a heavy gale to a landsman is merely smiled at by your bronzed witness of a thousand real storms) the work is at once commenced.

A truly wonderful piece of mechanism is the "picking-up" machine used in all grappling and cable-hoisting operations. It is a powerful variety of the common steam-winch family, but also a most aristocratic and elaborate member, fitted with gear-changing clutches, patent brakes, and other ingenious appliances. To give some idea of its capabilities in dry figures, it can at slow speed lift twenty-five tons at a rate of one mile per hour, or at fast speed ten knots at the rate of four miles per hour. Moreover, it can be quickly altered and adapted to changing circumstances in speed or lifting weight.

All being made ready, the big grapnel, attached to seven or eight hundred fathoms of chain and rope, is passed over the bow-sheave, or pulley, and as soon as it reaches bottom the ship is sent slowly ahead. Back and forward across the path of the cable, as pointed out by the friendly marking-buoys, we steam. Several times the grapnel catches something, only to lose its hold again,—probably an inequality upon the bottom, although a bosun's mate mumbles "mermaid's grottos,"—but at last comes a steady strain. Every soul on board hangs over the bow, watching the grimy grapnel-rope coming steadily up and over the well-oiled pulley. At length the grapnel itself appears, holding tight on to the truant. The hoisting ceases. Men swarm down and attach derrick falls upon either side of the point where the grapnel holds. Next, the cable is cut between the stops, and both ends are hauled aboard. Quickly the instruments are connected, and from out on the ocean flashes the message which informs the grave officials in the metropolis that all is going well. For some little while communications are brisk, as those upon the ship send word to expectant wives and families, or receive advice of happenings in the busy world that have transpired since they last left port. But after the first flurry the routine is resumed, and the electricians left to toil away uninterruptedly at their monotonous keys and resistance plugs.

The cut end of the cable, perhaps a mile or so in length, is hauled aboard and stowed away. Meanwhile the main body of the crew are busily engaged in splicing the short cable to an end of the tank cargo.

In order to appreciate this delicate operation, a few words in regard to the modern construction of ocean cables become necessary. In the very centre is the core, the real life-blood of the whole, as it were, comprising the conductor, made of a strand of copper wires covered with some such insulating material as gutta-percha or india-rubber, so as to prevent the escape of the electric fluid. Over this is a layer of jute yarn, serving as a protection from the next jacket of steel wires; over which in turn come more jute yarn, bituminous compounds, and heavier steel wires. The courses of this outside sheathing vary according to the type, inshore cable having many more than the deep-sea variety, on account of extra susceptibility to danger from ship's anchors, chafing, and tides. In all types, however, the inner core is the same. To make the splice properly, the outer sheathing is laid back so that when the core has been joined the steel wires, relaid, will overlap the joint for seven or eight feet upon either side. The two ends of the conductor are carefully filed clean and firmly soldered together. A small amount of a certain mysterious compound (supposed to be a mixture of Stockholm tar and gutta-percha) is applied and worked with a hot iron so as to leave no fugitive air spaces. The ends of the gutta-percha covering are heated and drawn until they meet about the middle of the exposed conductor. Next come bandages of softened gutta-percha and a bath of ice-water to quickly harden them. The outer sheathings are laboriously replaced by hand as well as may be. Over the whole long splice a heavy tarred jute yarn is tightly served, and the job is finished.

Next follow more electrical tests, messages being sent through the whole cable cargo and recently spliced section to the mainland, and, all being found in perfect order, we are ready to proceed. The cable is threaded through the various guiding and friction sheaves, under the pulley of the strain-measuring dynamometer, and out over the big stern wheel. The stops are let go, engines started, the ship moves ahead, and the cable begins paying out astern and sinking to its gloomy resting-place.

There seems to be no logical reason why cables cannot be laid across any section of the oceans of the world, no matter how great the depth. Some portions of the Atlantic cables are over three miles below the surface, and this is not necessarily the extreme depth, for the cable may, and probably does, pass from the top of one submarine hill to another without drooping materially into the deep valleys between. The greatest known depth of the sea is forty thousand two hundred and thirty-six feet, or seven and three-fifths miles, found in the South Atlantic about midway between the island of Tristan d'Acunha and the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. Soundings have been made to the depth of twenty-seven thousand four hundred and eighty feet in the North Atlantic, south of Newfoundland, and about thirty-four thou-

sand feet, or nearly six and a half miles, is reported south of the Bermudas. Even such enormous depths as these need not hinder cable-laying, so far as the theory is concerned, but in practice, for reasons of economy in maintenance and otherwise, it is found best to take advantage of favoring conditions in the ocean's bed. To illustrate, all of the cables between the United States and Europe run up along our coast until they reach the neighborhood of Newfoundland before starting across to their destinations in Ireland or France. The reason for this is found in the range of submarine table-lands, forming an ideal cable-bed, which lies between the three latter countries. In past years immense portions of this submerged territory have been plotted out and mapped by various governmental and private expeditions, and this knowledge is constantly being added to. It becomes particularly valuable in economic cable-laying. Except in extreme cases, the electrical conductor is not dropped overboard hap-hazard. On the contrary, the submarine mountains, valleys, and plains over which it is to take its sinuous course are accurately selected beforehand, and their general configuration, soil-covering, if any, and other peculiarities properly taken into consideration. Special varieties of cable are manufactured to meet certain conditions known to exist where they are to go. Like men in all trades, the cable-layers must adhere closely to the specifications given them at starting in order to perform the right kind of work.

The steamship, therefore, while going ahead and paying out the cable over the stern pulley, is under the guidance of skilled hands, following a certain path, which has been pointed out for her by sages on the mainland as being the best adapted for the comfort and ease of the electrical conductor she is depositing.

To readers who appreciate the uncertainties of ocean navigation, with its calms and storms, its fogs and lowering cloud-banks, this detail will come home very closely. Of course the steamship has the compasses, sextants, chronometers, and charts of ordinary navigation upon the high seas; but these are merely supplemental from the point of view of the cable-layer. As has been intimated, he aims to measure by feet and inches, and not by approximate miles. I must not omit mention of a couple of the ingenious instruments which have been evolved for this purpose.

The elaborate deep-sea lead, quickly lowered and hoisted by means of its reels of pianoforte wire, announces the depth, and the grease-filled cavity upon its underside brings up samples of the bottom. These two combined clues usually make identification of the locality an easy matter. There is also what is known as the "James submarine sentry and sounding machine." This is a device called a "kite," trailed astern at any required depth. Should the bottom grow shallower and touch the "kite," it immediately releases one of its fastenings, and in so doing rings various bells up on board of the ship.



## 128 To a Dying Bee—What are the Great Stars

In due time we come in sight of the second cluster of buoys. Boats are lowered, tackles made fast, and that end of the cable brought aboard. For a brief space the ship becomes a focal point of news from two continents. Then, having passed the final tests, the two ends are carefully spliced together, the retaining stoppers cut, and the great wire rope disappears in the depths. The cable is laid. Another bridge has been thrown across an ocean.



### TO A DYING BEE

BY ALOYSIUS COLL

WE are twin-spirits, fit to understand  
Each other's sorrow—you a dying bee,  
Drowsy and numb upon the grass, and I  
The ashes of a dream that burned in me.

When summer sent you booming down the dune,  
Thirsting, you came unto a flower new  
And seeming sweet. You sipped your heart's desire—  
And lo, the nectar was a poison-dew!

When summer sent me singing down the moor,  
I found a wilding lily, and her breath  
Was woman's witchery. I thought it sweet—  
Aye, sweetened wormwood, and the dregs were death.

We are twin-spirits, cheated by a sign  
Of venom gilded with a shallow gleam,—  
You drowsy from the poisoned honey, I  
Awake to the deception of a dream.



### WHAT ARE THE GREAT STARS, WHITE AND BLUE

BY BLISS CARMAN

WHAT are the great stars, white and blue,  
Sparkling along the twilight there?  
They are the dewy gems let fall  
When I loosed your hair.

What is the great, pale, langorous moon  
On the floor of the sea alone?  
That is the yellow rose let fall  
When I loosed your zone.



## TWO NOTABLE BOOKS

**P**ING PONG, or Table Tennis, as its votaries prefer to style it, has captured the English-speaking world, and on all sides, in clubs, hotels, and private houses, is heard the "ping," "pong" of the ball on the vellum-surfaced racquet which gave the game its original name. Though it has sprung into prominence only during the last couple of years, it was played in a crude form some time ago, but dropped temporarily out of sight, to be revived only by an accident. Now it claims its thousands of enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic, organized into clubs upon clubs, with its inter-club play and its tournaments, one of which at least, held in London, was accorded national importance in British sports. The formation of an Association is an established fact in Great Britain, and that body is now engaged in formulating definitive rules which may be universally adopted.

**A Handbook to  
Ping Pong.**

Several factors combine to render Table Tennis emphatically a "popular" sport in the best sense of the word—a sport which not only appeals to all tastes, but which requires such a moderate outlay as to be accessible to practically all pocket-books. "Owing to its easy adaptability to existing circumstances, Table Tennis has, in general popularity, far exceeded that of Billiards or any other indoor game," write the authors. "A pastime in which skill, control of temper, and moderate exercise are so well combined would be difficult indeed to find. Although originally scoffed at and held in contempt by the votaries of football, cricket, lawn tennis, and other athletic sports, the game has already among its enthusiastic adherents well-known sportsmen. Altogether, Table Tennis is daily making such enormous strides that it may be quite looked for in the future to become one of our national games, and it is probable that developments will take place of which even those playing have no conception.

"All that is necessary for this fascinating game is a good-sized table, a fair amount of room at both ends and sides, a pair of bats or racquets, a celluloid ball, and a net to stretch across the table at a height of three-quarters of an inch to each foot of table length, suspended on a couple of posts so clamped to the table that the net will project some three or four inches on each side. There are two players, one at each end of the table. Tersely stated, the object of the game is for one player to so strike the ball over the net to the other player that the latter is unable to return it.

"We have here a game which is in the reach of almost every one to play, and in which ladies, gentlemen, and children are almost on an

equality. It is easily learnt, and reasonable proficiency, provided the player has a correct eye, is soon attained. No special apartment is required, and the implements are all inexpensive. It has one very great advantage in that players may play in their homes without upsetting existing arrangements, and as moderate exercise only is necessitated, it forms a most healthy amusement for after dinner. It is quite unnecessary to be a champion to enjoy playing, as the game has a fascination peculiarly its own, but for those who wish to attain higher proficiency clubs offer an unlimited field of attainment."

The "Handbook," by the noted players, M. J. G. Ritchie and Walter Harrison, contains a history and a description of the game, a discussion of the Methods of Play, the Rules as at present formulated, a discussion of the Leading Strokes, directions for Tournament Play and International Matches, and a description of the Accessories of the Game.

BRIEFLY stated, the purpose of Dr. Edward P. Davis's sterling handbook is to answer the "What?" the "Why?" and the "How?" that so constantly beset the mother in doing her duty towards **Mother and Child.** her child. As he says, the book "is not intended to supply prescriptions for medicines nor to take the place of the family physician. It is designed to help him in the care of his patients by placing at their disposal information which physicians commonly give to their patients. The physical prosperity of mothers and children is so largely dependent upon the faithful observance of simple precautions, that anything which gives information regarding this care cannot fail to be useful. The form of the present edition of the book has been largely suggested to the writer by the needs of his own practice, and embraces much advice which he usually gives to his patients."

It follows, then, that it is written without technicalities, in language understood of the people, and that its directions are sufficiently thorough and withal simple to tide the mother over many of the anxieties and perplexities incidental to motherhood.

In treating of "The Mother," the author deals with her needs and well-being both before and during confinement, until her complete restoration to health. Besides the more strictly medical phases, the hygienic conditions—as to dress, diet, exercise, and manner of living generally—best calculated to a favorable confinement are detailed, upon his stated principle that "the physical prosperity largely depends upon a faithful observance of simple precautions."

The larger portion of the book, however, deals with "The Child," through a series of seventeen chapters: *The Cradle*, treating of the sleeping-accommodations for the infant; *The Child's Clothing*; *Formation of Milk*, and its effect upon the infant, the time and best methods for nursing, and so on; *Artificial Feeding*, by the wet-nurse, by some form of modified, pasteurized, or sterilized milk, or on a mixed

diet, with a consideration of children's food; *Air and Exercise*; *The Nursery*; *The Healthy Child*, the characteristics by which health is recognized, and the conditions and care necessary to preserve health during the child's development; *The Care, Education, and Moral Development of the Child during Its Crisis of Development*, treating of the gradual intellectual and moral awakening to keep pace with the physical progress; *The Signs of Illness in Children*, as regards infection, contagion, eruptions, and so on, the child's expressions of disease, and the signs of chronic disease; *Nursing Sick Children*, directions for nursing various forms of disease, with a discussion of the question, "Shall the mother nurse the child?" *Infectious and Contagious Diseases*, the methods by which contagion and infection are conveyed, avoidance, symptoms, isolation, and general nursing; *The Conveyance of Contagion and Infection*, fumigation, disinfection, etc.; *Medical Emergencies*, poisoning and its prevention and counteraction, convulsions, heat-stroke, nose-bleed, etc.; *Surgical Emergencies*, cuts, burns, breaks, sprains, and the like; *External Applications*, of heat, cold, baths, etc.; *Asepsis and Antisepsis*; and *Inoculation and Vaccination*. A valuable Dietary, with recipes for various foods, rounds out an exceedingly complete and useful volume.

As to the authoritative character of the book, reference need only be made to the eminent professional standing of the author, and to the fact that the original edition (this being the second, revised and enlarged) had the benefit of the collaboration of the late Dr. John M. Keating, whose "Cyclopædia of the Diseases of Children" is the recognized authority on the subject.




THE eminent dermatologist, Dr. George Henry Fox, is the author of "A Practical Treatise on Smallpox," with the collaboration of S. Dana Hubbard, M.D., Sigmund Pollitzer, M.D., and John H. Huddleston, M.D. The "Treatise" is in the form of a photographic atlas, containing ten colored plates, representing typical cases of Variola in its successive stages, and six black and white photographic plates, showing unusual phases of Variola, Vaccinia, Varicella, and diseases with which smallpox is liable to be confounded; there are forty-three illustrations in all. The accompanying text is brief and eminently practical in character, treating of the symptoms and course of the disease, the characteristic points of diagnosis, and the approved methods of treatment. There is also a chapter on Vaccination, treating of the technique, the complications incidental to vaccination, and the method of obtaining the most trustworthy virus.

"Whenever a physician is called to a case of suspected smallpox, he confronts a grave responsibility," writes Dr. Fox. "If young or without special experience, he is apt to feel a sore need of assistance, and although a book can never take the place of an experienced consultant, it is the object of the present work to render him as much aid as

possible. The text aims to be practical rather than elaborate. The plates are reproductions of photographs from life, some of which have been obtained under great difficulty.

"While many articles on variola have been illustrated by a few photographs of cases, mostly of the pustular type, this work is believed to be the first which has presented illustrations of the smallpox eruption in each of its successive stages. It is sincerely hoped that the reader will find it of service in familiarizing him with the peculiar features of the disease."



"THE ARTIFICIAL FEEDING OF INFANTS," by Charles F. Judson, M.D., and J. Claxton Gittings, M.D., is an exhaustive study, giving a clear exposition of the methods in practical use for the care and preparation of milk for the infant. Milk modification is fully explained, with an important presentation of the various methods of feeding in vogue at home and abroad, a statement of the different theories advocated, an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of sterilization and pasteurization, and very important chapters on mother's milk, cow's milk, and digestion, allowing the greatest possible latitude for the variation and dietetic requirements of every individual case.

# NEW SAMARIA

BY

S. WEIR MITCHELL, M.D.

AUTHOR OF "HUGH WYNNE, FREE QUAKER," "FRANÇOIS,"  
"CIRCUMSTANCE," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902

**COPYRIGHT, 1902, BY  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

**PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.**